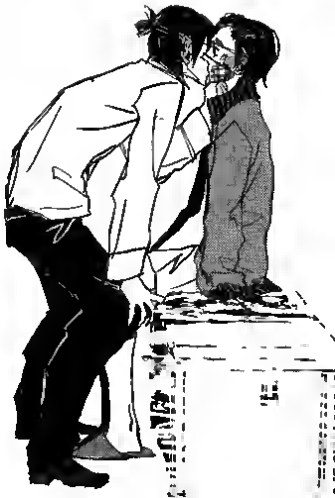
A Note on Production from Abscondite, the Project Coordinator

Since its inception, The Self-Abuse Project [TSAP] has been the brain child of 2terrible2kiss. With heartfelt gratitude we dedicate the release of this scanlation to her.

In the same breath we offer our most profound thanks to the main translator, Kokiden. Without her resilience and talent as a wordsmith, it is unlikely such an eloquently perceptive, mature narration could have been crafted.

This project has truly given new meaning to the phrase "the devil's in the details." Only the highest praise and admiration to TSAP's editors whose unfailing skill has created a pluperfect reconstruction of Renaissance Yoshida's exquisitely detailed art. We would also like to recognize the steadfast dedication and forbearance of Aripie and Shadow109 who rescued the project from an indeterminate editing standstill. And finally to Aripie, who magnanimously reconstructed one proud pussy after another, what a godsend you have been.

This scanlation is optimally viewed at 100% resolution, that is-- full size, gargantuan 1000-pixel width scans. Are you ready? From its lengthy gestation, we now bring you Renaissance Yoshida's tale of three delusional schoolboys.



project coordinators: 2terrible2kiss & abscondite

scans: 2terrible2kiss

Songs of Self-Abuse

Volume 1: The Withering of the Akane Shinchi Flower Shop

by Renaissance Yoshida

ISBN978-4-86349-058-1

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西新地花屋散華

ルネッサンス吉田

EDGE COMIX

西新社

ISBN978-4-86349-058-1

C9979 ¥1048E

雑誌 56454-74
発行 西新社
定価 本体1048円+税

SONGS OF SELF-ABUSE

WRITTEN BY RENAISSANCE YOSHIDA
PUBLISHED BY AKANESHINSHA Co., Ltd.
DELUSIONAL COMICS OF THREE HIGHSCHOOL BOYS
ISSUED 2007.4-2008-10 'OPERA'vol.06-12

茜新地花屋散華

EDGE COMIX

茜新地花屋散華（あかねしんちはなやのさんげ）

The Withering of the Akane Shinchi Flower Shop

* T/N: AKANE SHINCHI MEANS "FRESHLY BLOSSOMED MADDER." MADDER IS A RED FLOWER THAT IS USED TO MAKE RED DYE.

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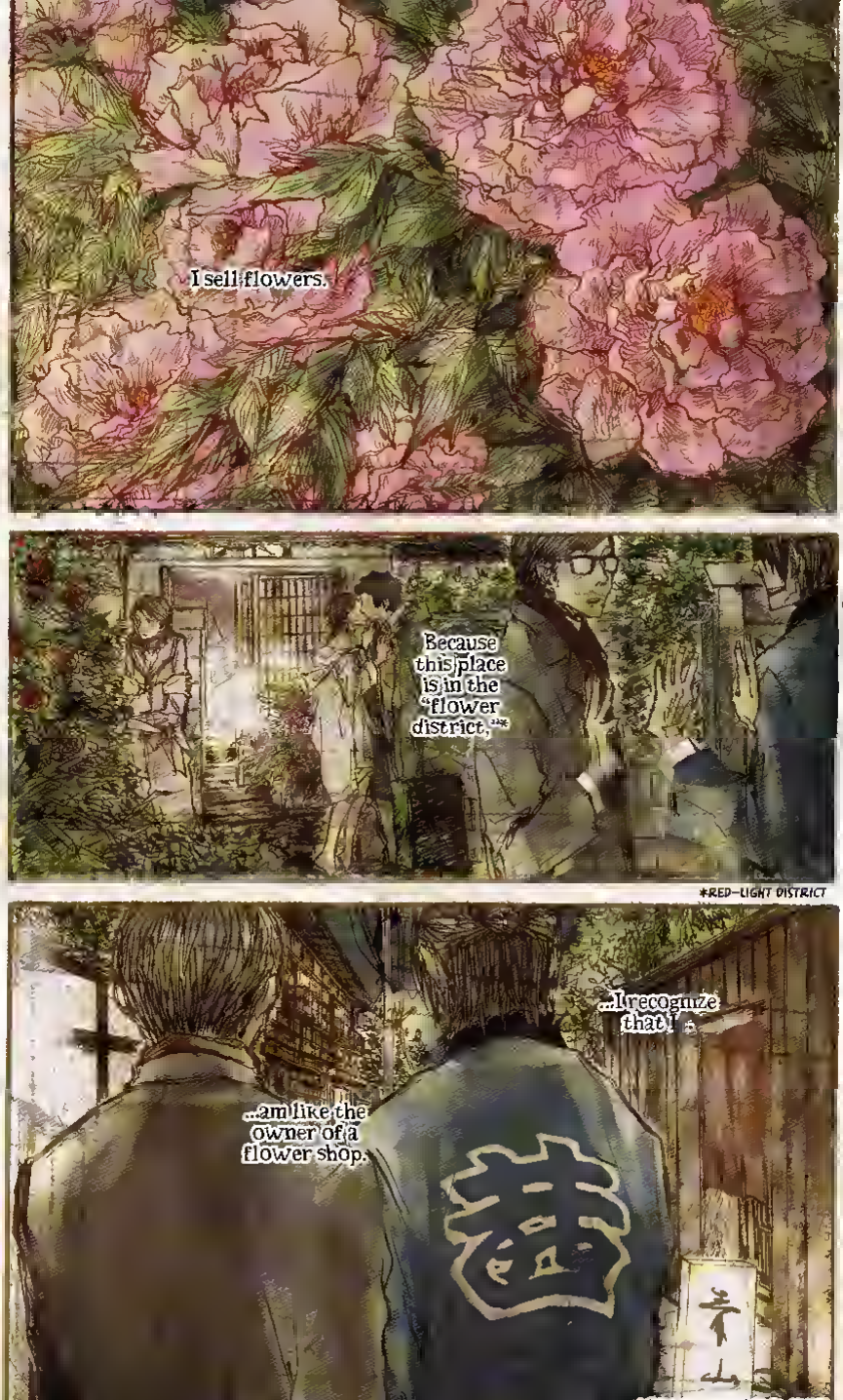
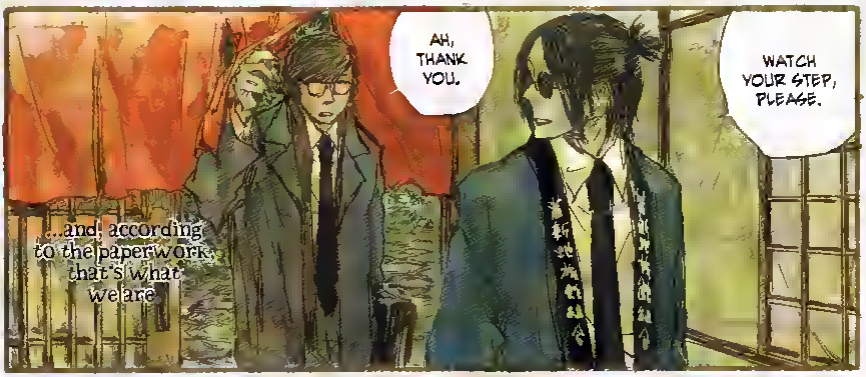
Book Design
Shimizu Design Laboratory

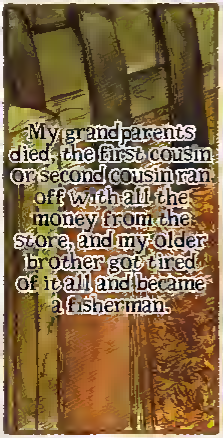


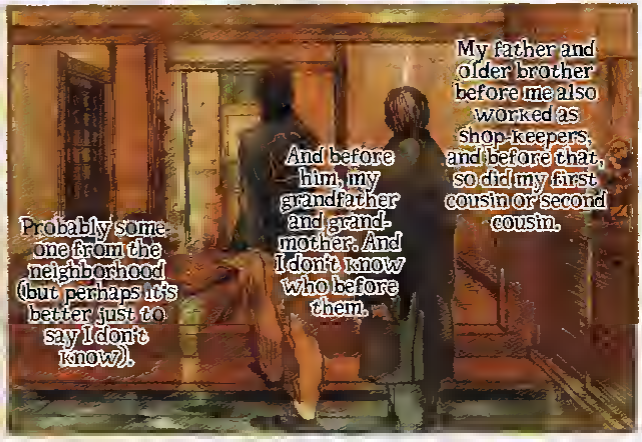
*RED-LIGHT DISTRICT

*SIGN ON JUITA'S BACK: AKANE

茜新地花屋散華
The Withering of the Akane Shinchi Flower Shop
第零話 (春)彼岸前頃
Chapter Zero: Before the (Spring) Equinox


AH, THANK YOU.
WATCH YOUR STEP, PLEASE.
...and, according to the paperwork, that's what we are.

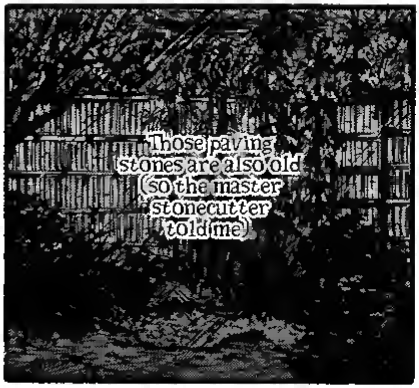

My grandparents died, the first cousin or second cousin ran off with all the money from the store, and my older brother got tired of it all and became a fisherman.

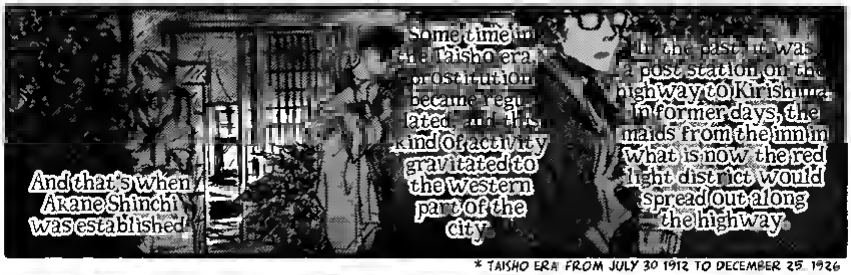

Probably someone from the neighborhood (but perhaps it's better just to say I don't know).
And before him, my grandfather and grandmother. And I don't know who before them.
My father and older brother before me also worked as shop-keepers, and before that, so did my first cousin or second cousin.

By that time I noticed I was being called the shop manager,

I had been helping my older brother at that time, and I just continued on without thinking.

MIDORI-CHA~AN!
YE~ES?
...because...
...I realized that I was indeed the shop manager.
GOOD EVENING. PLEASE COME IN.
THANK YOU. PARDON MY INTRUSION.
This building is old.
IT MUST BE COLD OUTSIDE ...
YOUR NOSE IS COLD.
rattle
rattle
rattle
click

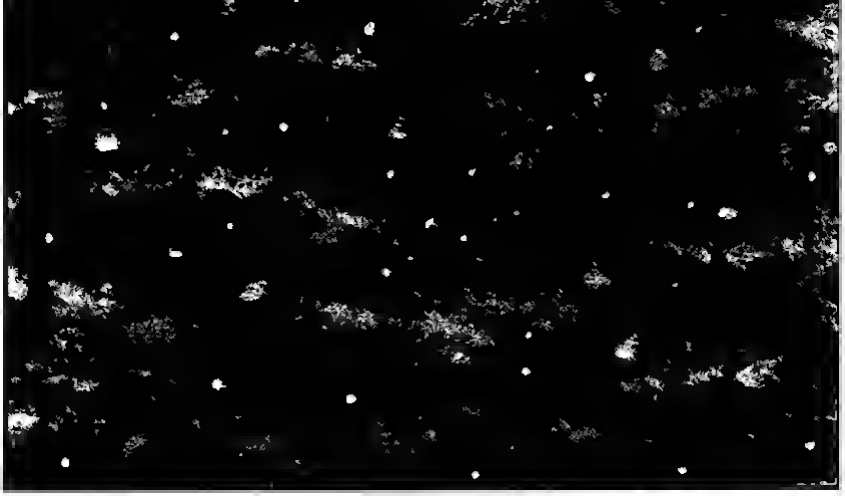


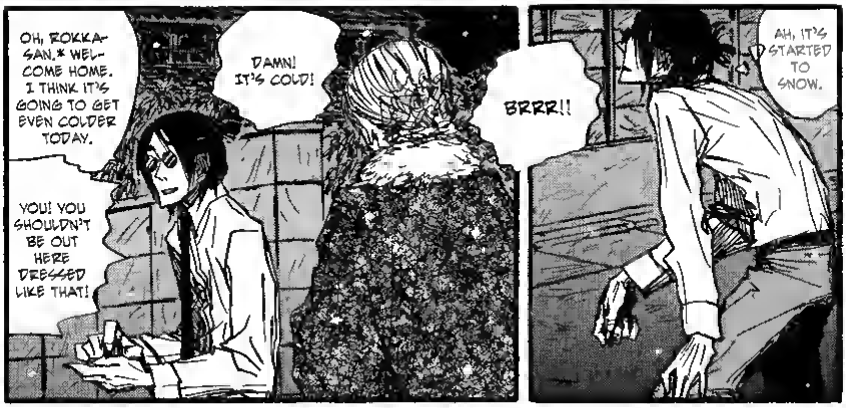

And that's when Akane Shinchi was established.
Some time in the Taisho era, prostitution became regulated and this kind of activity gravitated to the western part of the city.
In the past it was a post station on the highway to Kirishima. In former days, the maids from the inn in what is now the red light district would spread out along the highway.

* TAISHO ERA: FROM JULY 30 1912 TO DECEMBER 25 1926

AH.
AHN.
AH!
AH.
AH.
GOOD WORK TODAY.
OH, DID YOU CALL THEM AGAIN?
YES, THE SECOND TIME THIS MONTH. I'M REALLY HOPING TO HAVE THE TOILET REPLACED.
IS THAT RIGHT? LET'S HOPE THEY CAN FIX IT SOON
THANKS, BOSS.
GOOD WORK TODAY, KASUMI-CHAN.
YOU FINISHED UP QUICKLY.
OH, MANGER. GOOD WORK.

IT'S GOING TO SNOW TODAY.
YOU LOOK COLD.
SO HURRY UP AND GET INSIDE.
GOOD WORK.
EXCUSE ME-- I'LL GO IN, THEN!




OH, ROKKA-SAN.* WELCOME HOME. I THINK IT'S GOING TO GET EVEN COLDER TODAY.
DAMN! IT'S COLD!
YOU! YOU SHOULDN'T BE OUT HERE DRESSED LIKE THAT!
BRRR!!
AH, IT'S STARTED TO SNOW.

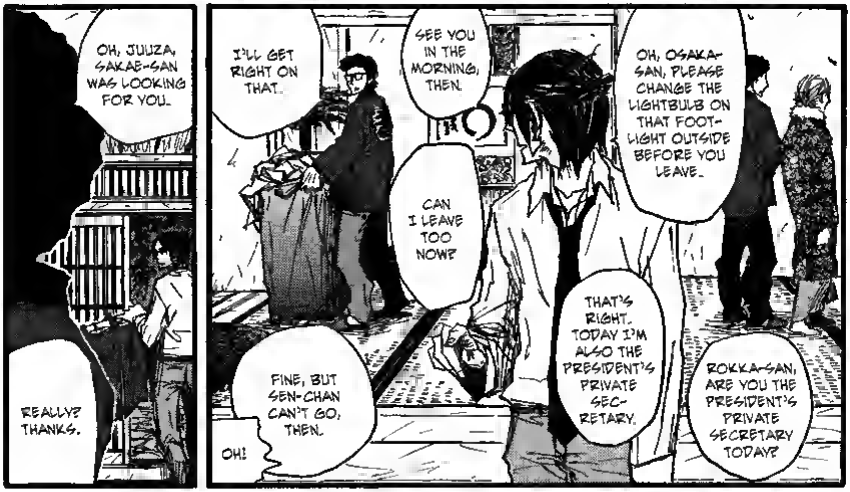
THAT'S NICE.
NO, IT'S NOT. IT'S NO GOOD FOR WALKING AROUND IN.
IT'LL BE BAD FOR BUSINESS.
THE SNOW IS GOING TO COVER EVERYTHING.
YOU THINK IT'LL STICK?
IT'S STARTING TO PILE UP, SO SWEEPING IT UP WILL BE POINTLESS.
IT WILL DEFINITELY STICK

* THE CHARACTER'S NAME MEANS SNOW (BUT WITH A DIFFERENT PRONUNCIATION ROKKA) THE KANJI IS MADE OF THE WORDS "SIX" AND "FLOWER." SO IN JAPANESE THIS IS ANOTHER FLOWER IMAGE.

THAT'S RIGHT. THE LIGHTBULB NEEDS TO BE REPLACED.

OH, ROKKA-SAN, WELCOME HOME.
GOOD WORK, JUUZA.*
NOT AT ALL, NOT AT ALL. THANK YOU FOR YOUR HARD WORK.
IT'S SO WAAAARM!
EXCUSE ME, THEN, I'LL LEAVE THE PLACE TO YOU.

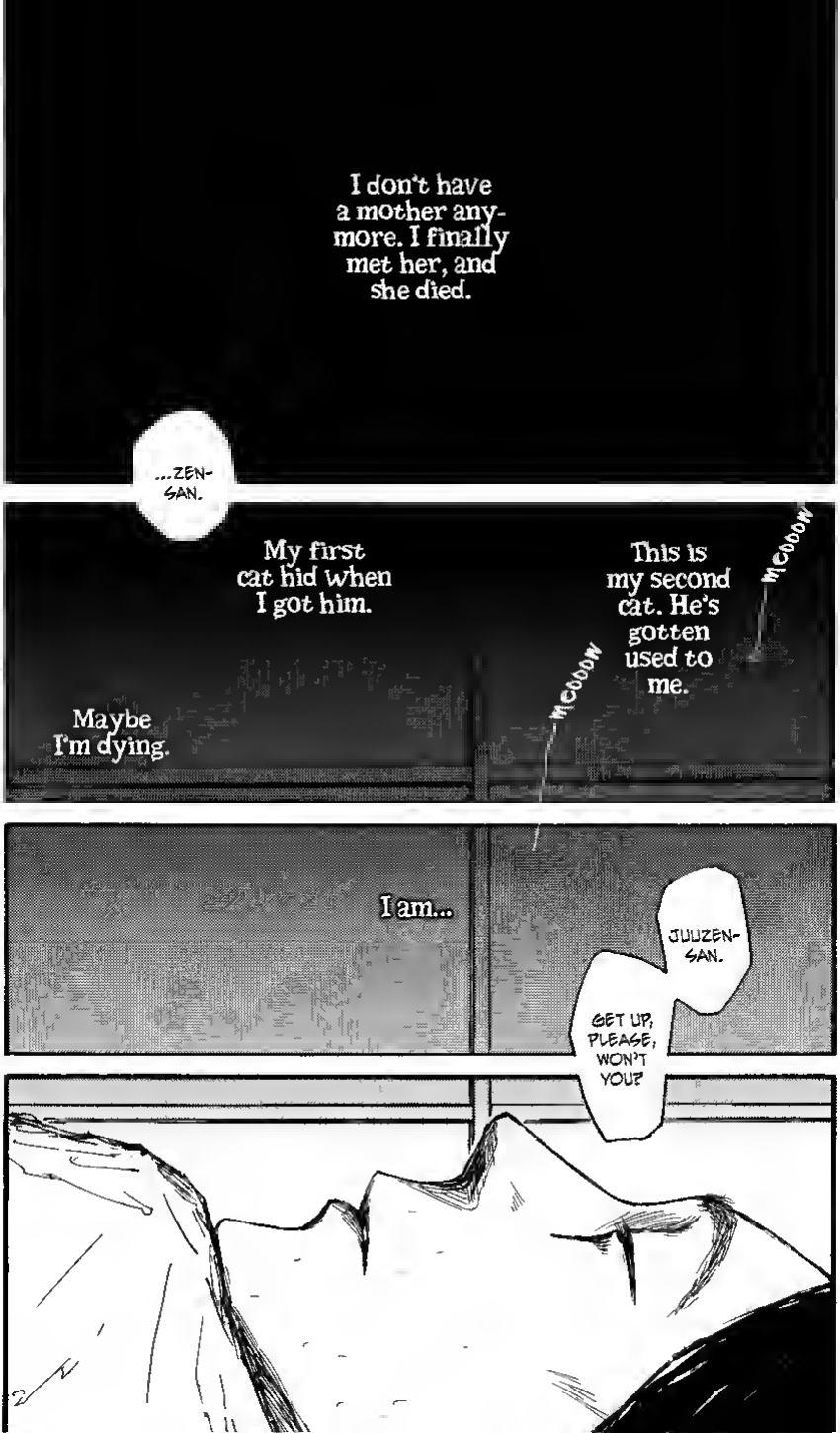
*JUUZA'S NAME USES THE SAME KANJI AS "JUUSAN" OR "THIRTEEN." IT APPEARS TO BE A NICKNAME. AS LATER, HE'S MORE FORMALLY CALLED "JUUZEN" WITH DIFFERENT KANJI


OH, JUUZA, SAKAE-SAN WAS LOOKING FOR YOU.
REALLY? THANKS.
I'LL GET RIGHT ON THAT.
SEE YOU IN THE MORNING, THEN.
OH, OSAKA-SAN, PLEASE CHANGE THE LIGHTBULB ON THAT FOOT-LIGHT OUTSIDE BEFORE YOU LEAVE.
CAN I LEAVE TOO NOW?
THAT'S RIGHT. TODAY I'M ALSO THE PRESIDENT'S PRIVATE SEC-RETARY.
ROKKA-SAN, ARE YOU THE PRESIDENT'S PRIVATE SECRETARY TODAY?
FINE, BUT SEN-CHAN CAN'T GO, THEN.
OH!

I'LL STAY.
rattle
rattle
OH ALL RIGHT.
rattle
JUUZEN-SAN?

snap

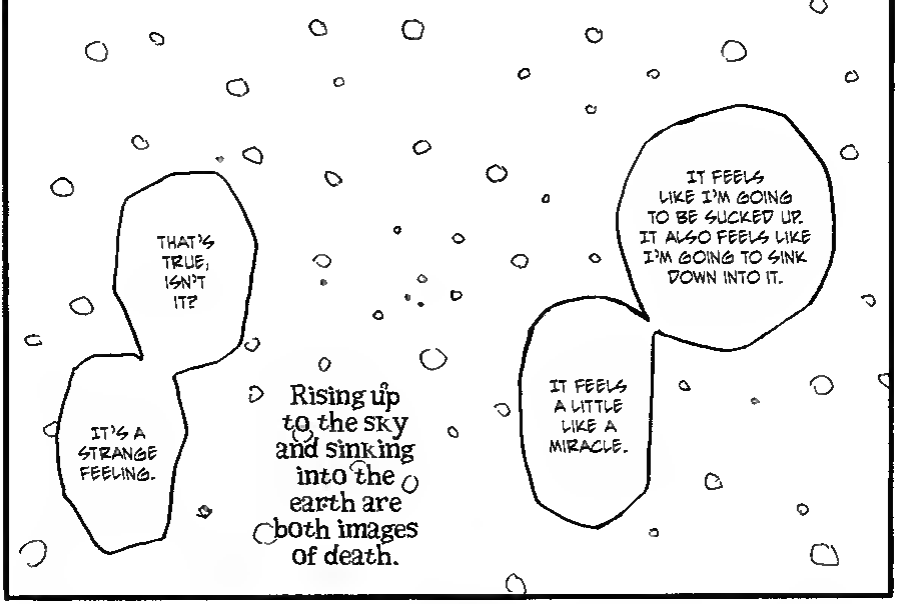
第一話
幻影の盾
あねしんちはなやのさんげ
西新地花屋敷
Chapter 1:
The Phantom
Shield


I don't have a mother anymore. I finally met her, and she died.
...ZEN-SAN.
My first cat hid when I got him.
Maybe I'm dying.
This is my second cat. He's gotten used to me.
MEOOOW
MEOOOW
I am...
JUUZEN-SAN.
GET UP, PLEASE, WON'T YOU?

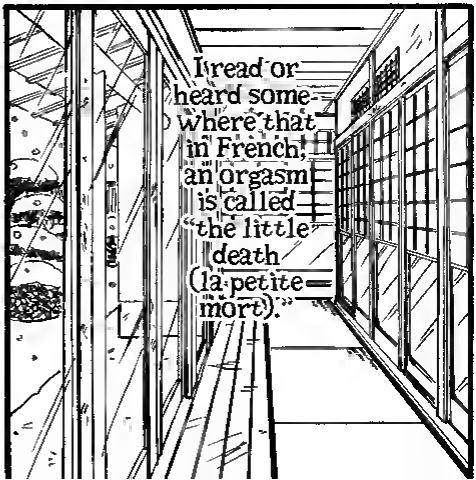
MY HEAD HURTS...
JUUZEN-SAN.
...IT'S REALLY COLD...
WON'T YOU COME AND SEE, PLEASE?
SEE HOW IT'S PILING UP.
IT'S DAZZLING ...
IT HURTS MY EYES.

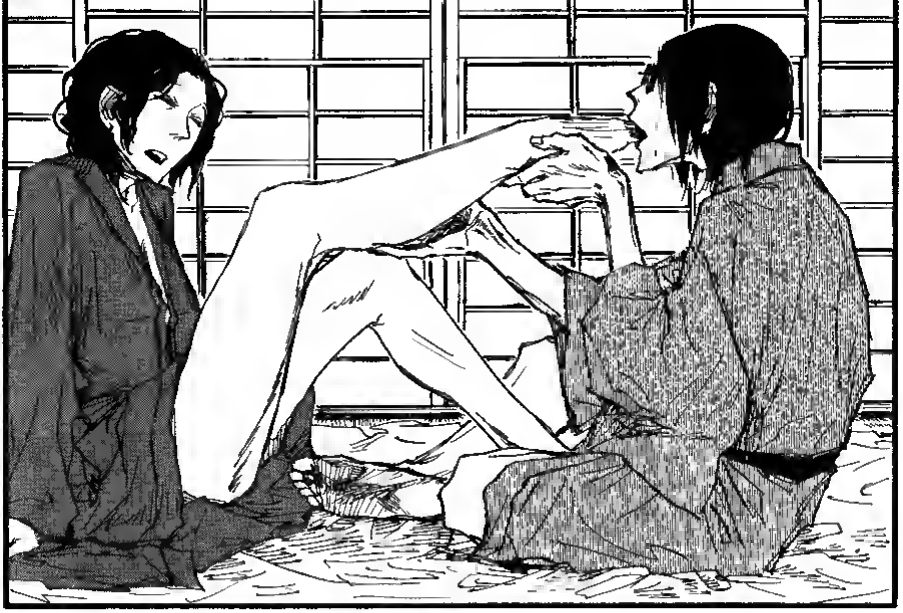
GLASSES, GLASSES ...
HOW MANY YEARS HAS IT BEEN SINCE IT PILED UP LIKE THIS?
AH...
I SEEM TO REMEMBER...
THAT'S RIGHT. IT WAS SNOWING THE YEAR I FIRST MET YOU.
YOU'RE GOING TO CATCH A COLD.
WHY ARE YOU DRESSED LIKE THAT...?
OH MY... THERE'S ENOUGH SNOW TO PLAY IN!
TAKE CARE, PLEASE.
ACHOO!
CHOO!

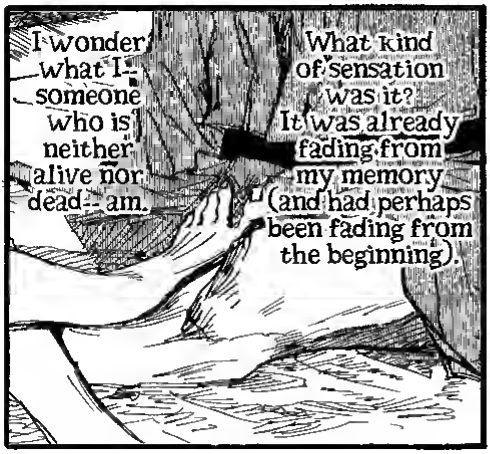
YOU'RE NOT A KID, SO—
I DON'T CARE THAT I'M NOT A KID!
JUUZEN-SAN, PRETTY PLEASE?
BUT YOU'RE NOT GOING TO GO BARE-FOOT?
YOU'RE REALLY HELPLESS, SAKAE-SAN.
NO, I'M NOT.
?
AT WHAT?
THE SKY.
WELL, I HOPE THAT'S ENOUGH TO SATISFY YOU. I'M TAKING YOU BACK TO YOUR ROOM.
?
NO, I'M STILL LOOK-ING!


THAT'S TRUE, ISN'T IT?
IT'S A STRANGE FEELING.
Rising up to the sky and sinking into the earth are both images of death.
IT FEELS LIKE I'M GOING TO BE SUCKED UP. IT ALSO FEELS LIKE I'M GOING TO SINK DOWN INTO IT.
IT FEELS A LITTLE LIKE A MIRACLE.

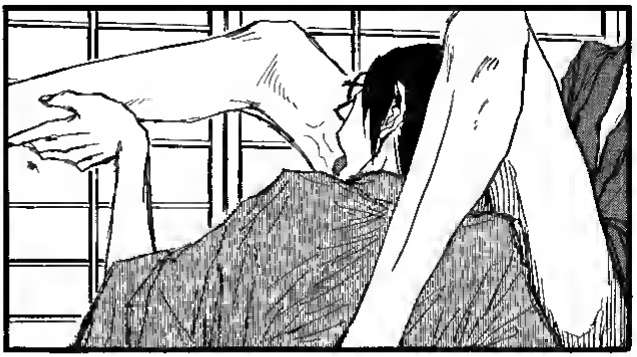
I'm just standing here stock still.
I'm neither rising nor sinking.

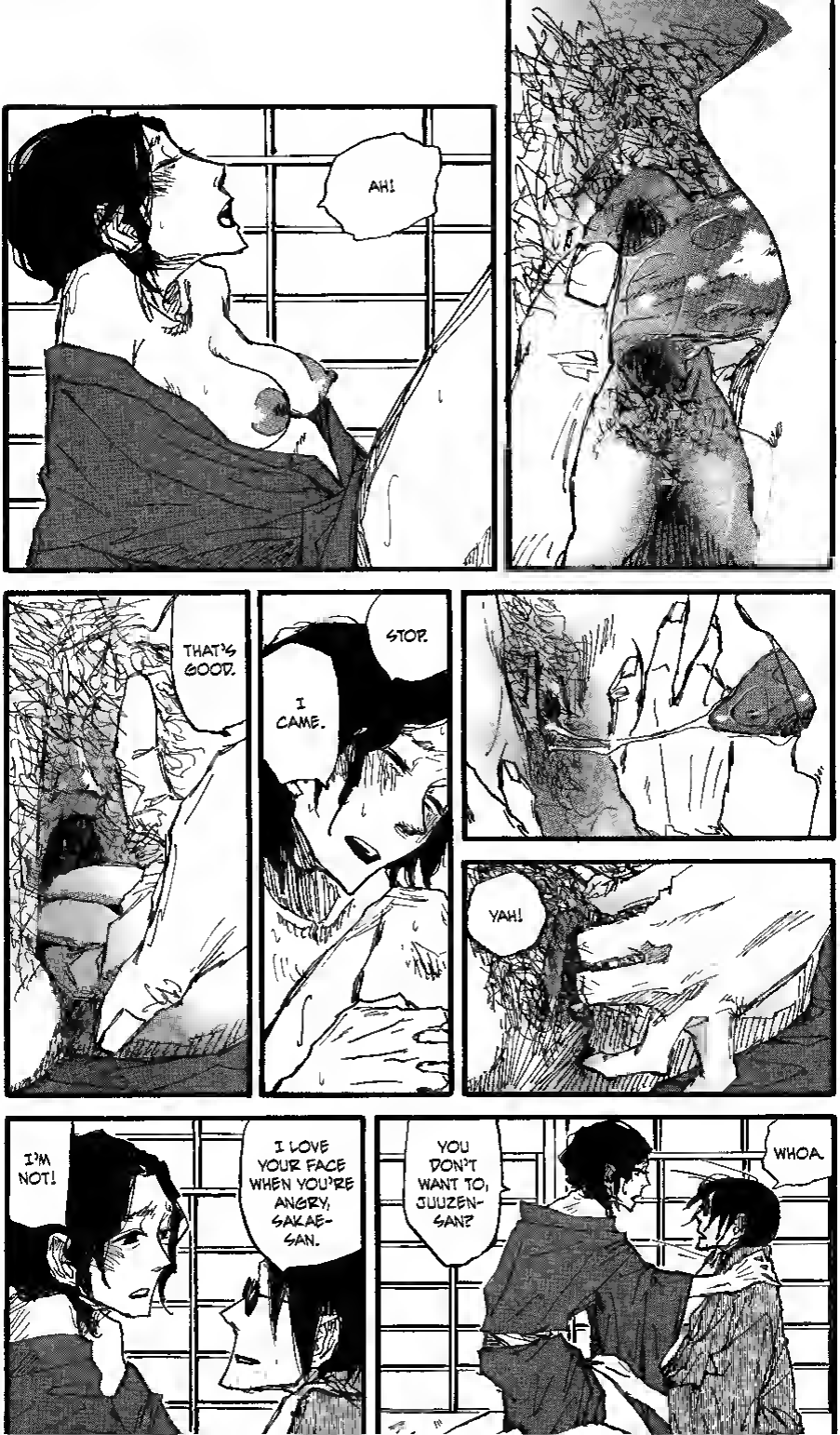

I read or heard somewhere that in French, an orgasm is called "the little death (la petite mort)."



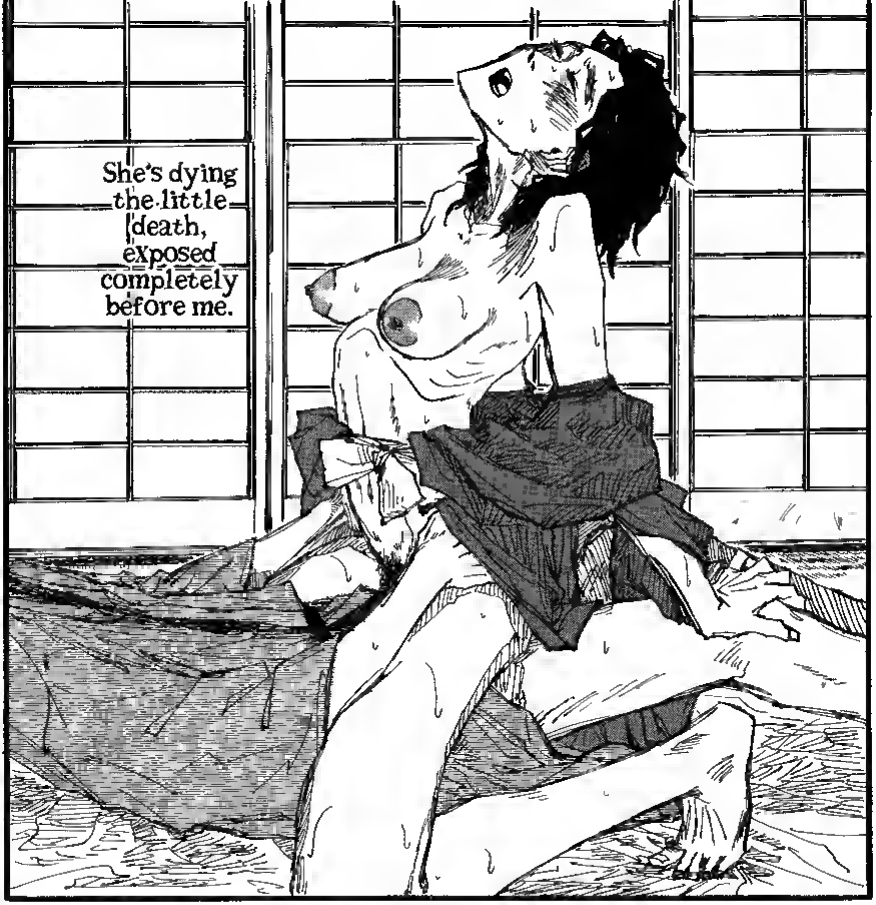

I wonder what I— someone who is neither alive nor dead— am.
What kind of sensation was it? It was already fading from my memory (and had perhaps been fading from the beginning).

LEVITRA® 20mg




AH!
THAT'S GOOD.
STOP.
I CAME.
YAH!
I'M NOT!
I LOVE YOUR FACE WHEN YOU'RE ANGRY, SAKAE-SAN.
YOU DON'T WANT TO, JUUZEN-SAN?
WHOA.

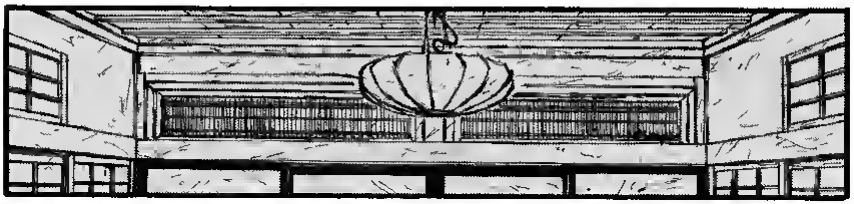
I WANT THIS.

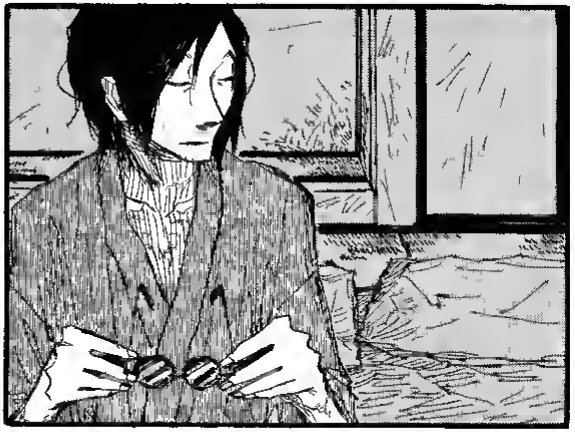

She's dying the little death, exposed completely before me.

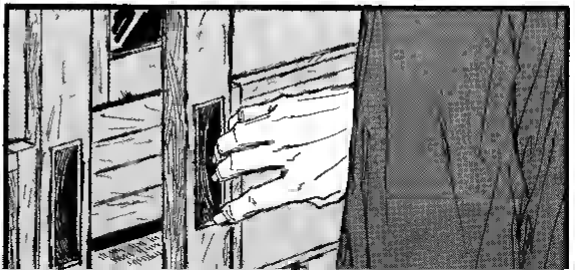
While I remain fully clothed in front of anyone and everyone.

JUUZEN-SAN.
WHAT IS IT, SAKAE-SAN?
NOTHING.
I JUST WANTED TO CALL OUT YOUR NAME.
IS THAT SO?
SAKAE-SAN.
WHAT IS IT?

IT'S NOT PROPER FOR THIS MOUTH TO SAY THAT KIND OF THING.
WHY'S THAT?
AREN'T YOU A LITTLE ASHAMED?
DON'T IMITATE ME.
IT'S NOTHING. I JUST WANTED TO CALL YOUR NAME.



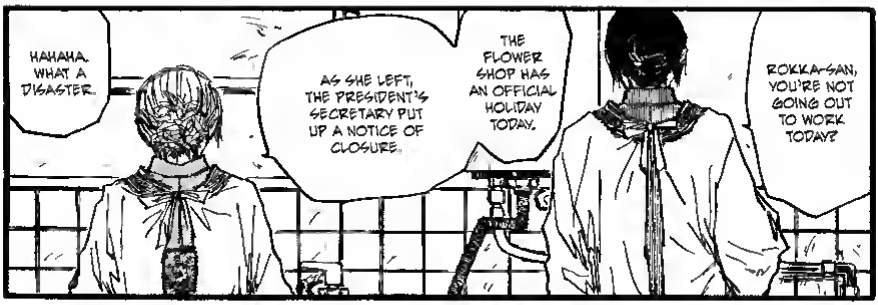


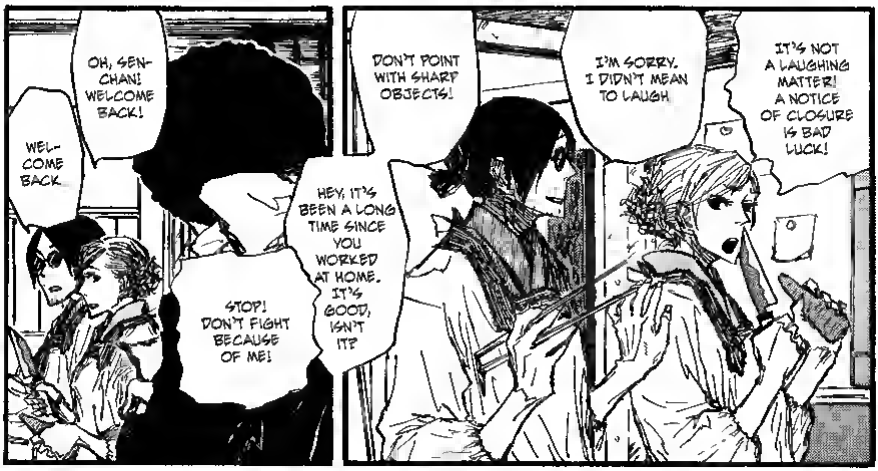


GOOD MORNING
OH, GOOD MORNING, JUJU!
GO-OD MO-ORNING!
THAT'S RIGHT.
GINPA'S ASSISTANT?
ROKKA-SAN, DO YOU KNOW SAKAE-SAN?
...OH, THAT. IT'S OKAY.
HOW IS YOUR COLD, TAMAKI-CHAN?
WELL, PLEASE DON'T OVERDO IT.
AH! DON'T TALK TO ME TILL I HAVE MY MASCARA AND EYELINER ON, PLEASE!
YES, WHAT IS IT?
OH, MANAGER
THE PART-TIMERS ARE BOTH OUT TODAY
MADOKA IS OUT BECAUSE OF HER PERIOD
REALLY?
HAHA SORRY BE CAREFUL.
GOT IT.
THE FLU IS GOING AROUND

HERE, USE THIS.
OH, THANKS.
JUJZA-CHAN.
YES?
WHAT ARE YOU MAKING?
CURRY. SAKAE-SAN TOLD ME SHE WANTED SOME.
CURRY?
WOW, CURRY?
DO YOU LIKE CURRY, TAMAKI-CHAN?
I LOVE IT!
I'LL MAKE A LOT, BECAUSE WE CAN EAT A LOT!
YESSS!
WELL, I'M GOING NOW!
HAVE A GOOD DAY!
WORK HARD!
YESSS, I WILL!

Siz
zle


HAHAHA. WHAT A DISASTER.
AS SHE LEFT, THE PRESIDENT'S SECRETARY PUT UP A NOTICE OF CLOSURE.
THE FLOWER SHOP HAS AN OFFICIAL HOLIDAY TODAY.
ROKKA-SAN, YOU'RE NOT GOING OUT TO WORK TODAY?

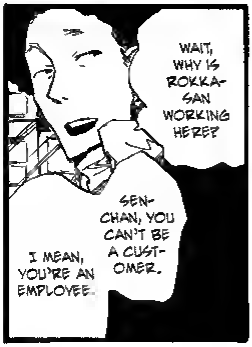

OH, SEN-CHAN! WELCOME BACK!
WEL-COME BACK.
STOP! DON'T FIGHT BECAUSE OF ME!
HEY, IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE YOU WORKED AT HOME. IT'S GOOD, ISN'T IT?
DON'T POINT WITH SHARP OBJECTS!
I'M SORRY. I DIDN'T MEAN TO LAUGH.
IT'S NOT A LAUGHING MATTER! A NOTICE OF CLOSURE IS BAD LUCK!

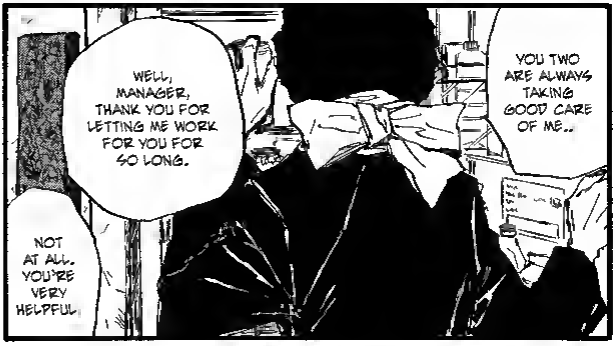
...IT WAS JUST A LITTLE JOKE. PLEASE DON'T TAKE IT OUT ON ME...
chuckle chuckle
THAT'S RIGHT. THAT'S NOT WHAT IT WAS ABOUT.
chop
chop
chop
chop
YOU'RE WRONG, THOUGH. WE WEREN'T ARGUING OVER YOU, SO RELAX.
sizzle
sizzle
sizzle
sizzle

*NYAA IS THE JAPANESE EQUIVALENT OF "MEOW" SO THE CAT'S NAME IS "MEOW"

...I... JOB.. EXAMINER
mmmble
BESIDES, THERE'S ANOTHER ONE TOMORROW ...
WHAT? WEREN'T YOU TAKING THE DAY OFF FOR YOUR ENTRANCE EXAM?
sizzle
sizzle
sizzle
sizzle
sizzle
AWW, NYAA-CHAN!*
HE'S INJURED
MRAOW
DEMON SIBLINGS ..
DON'T GANG UP ON ME ...
chop
chop
chop
JUST AS BIG A FOOL AS EVER, SEN-CHAN!
SENTAROU, YOU ARE JUST AS BIG A FOOL AS EVER!
sizzle
I SERIOUSLY THOUGHT I WAS GOING TO GO CRAZY AND DIE
PLUS, I BECOME UNABLE TO STOP THE VISION OF MY HEAD GROWING BIGGER ALL OF A SUDDEN FOR SOME REASON.
I GET SLEEPY AND ALL.
BUT IF IT'S WAY TOO COZY..
IT'S INDOORS, SO IT'S WARM, AND YOU CAN SIT DOWN, SO I THOUGHT IT'D BE A BREEZE
stroke stroke
purrrrr

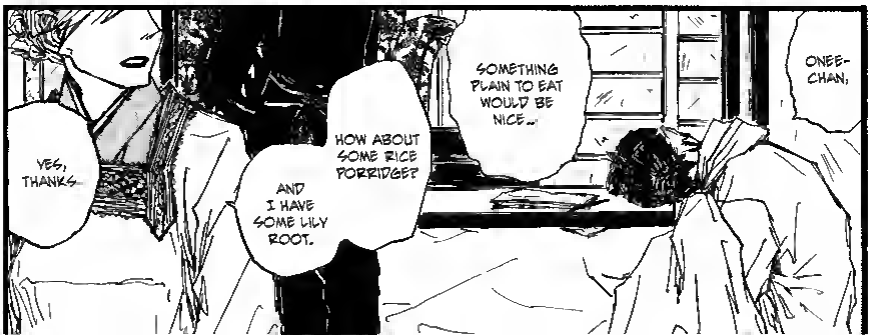
chop
chop
chop
chop
chop
chop
chop
YOU TWO...
TRULY, THEY ARE.
AREN'T THEY?
THE STUDENTS AT SUCH A TESTING PLACE ARE PITIFUL.
sizzle
sizzle
sizzle
sizzle
sizzle
sizzle
sizzle


WAIT, WHY IS ROKKA-SAN WORKING HERE?
SEN-CHAN, YOU CAN'T BE A CUST-OMER.
I MEAN, YOU'RE AN EMPLOYEE.

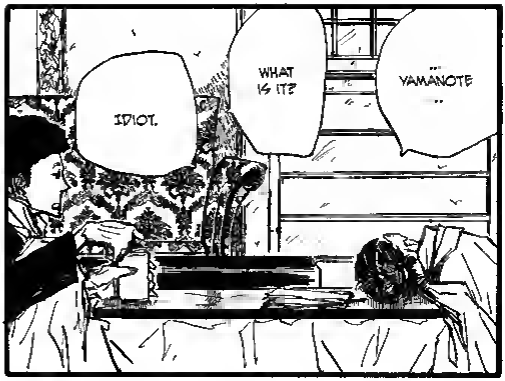

WELL, MANAGER, THANK YOU FOR LETTING ME WORK FOR YOU FOR SO LONG.
NOT AT ALL. YOU'RE VERY HELPFUL.
YOU TWO ARE ALWAYS TAKING GOOD CARE OF ME..

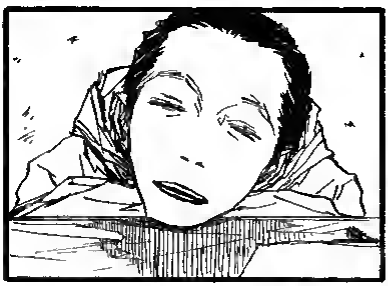
OH, NANAO-CHAN!
IMPOS-SIBLE
...CURRY...?
WHOA... NANAO-SAN
GOOD WORK TODAY.

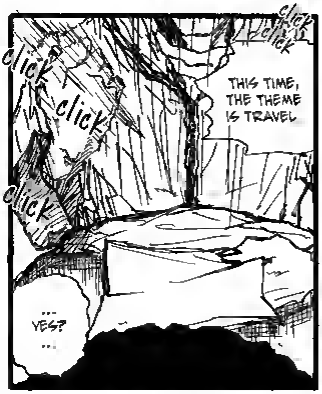
YEAH...
shut
YOU'RE RIGHT.

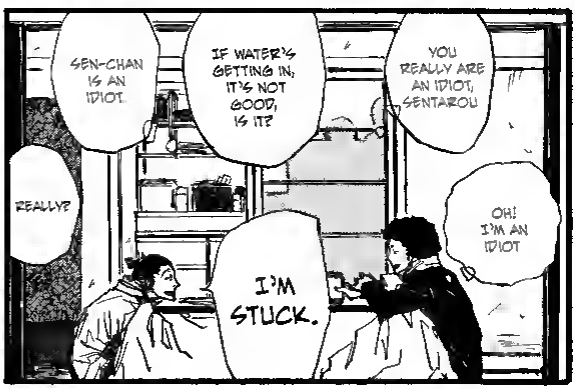

ONEE-CHAN,
SOMETHING PLAIN TO EAT WOULD BE NICE...
HOW ABOUT SOME RICE PORRIDGE?
AND I HAVE SOME LILY ROOT.
YES, THANKS

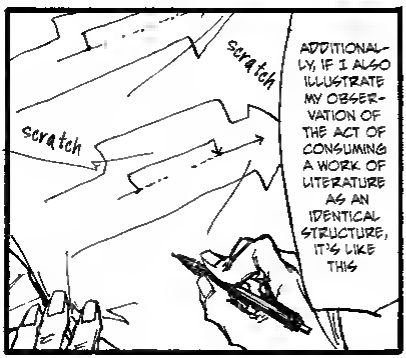
ARE YOU MAKING PROGRESS WITH THE STORY BOARD, NANAO-SAN?

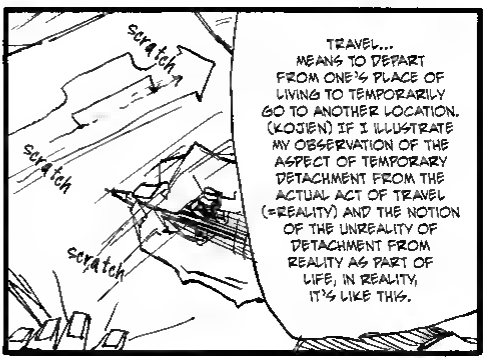

IDIOT.
WHAT IS IT?
... YAMANOTE ..



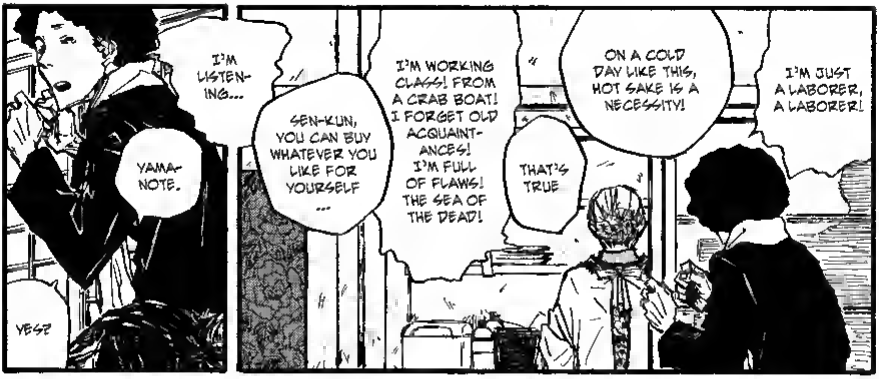

click click click click click
THIS TIME, THE THEME IS TRAVEL
... YES? ...


SEN-CHAN IS AN IDIOT.
IF WATER'S GETTING IN, IT'S NOT GOOD, IS IT?
YOU REALLY ARE AN IDIOT, SENTAROU
REALLY?
I'M STUCK.
OH! I'M AN IDIOT


scratch
scratch
ADDITIONALLY, IF I ALSO ILLUSTRATE MY OBSERVATION OF THE ACT OF CONSUMING A WORK OF LITERATURE AS AN IDENTICAL STRUCTURE, IT'S LIKE THIS


scratch
scratch
scratch
TRAVEL... MEANS TO DEPART FROM ONE'S PLACE OF LIVING TO TEMPORARILY GO TO ANOTHER LOCATION. (KOJIEN) IF I ILLUSTRATE MY OBSERVATION OF THE ASPECT OF TEMPORARY DETACHMENT FROM THE ACTUAL ACT OF TRAVEL (=REALITY) AND THE NOTION OF THE UNREALITY OF DETACHMENT FROM REALITY AS PART OF LIFE, IN REALITY, IT'S LIKE THIS.

...
WHOA.
scratch
scratch
scratch
scratch
IT'S BECAUSE TRAVEL IS ORGANIZED INTO THE COMPONENTS POINT OF ORIGIN (RESIDENCE), POINT OF ARRIVAL (DESTINATION) AND THE MULTIPLE EPISODES THAT ARISE DURING THE PROCESS OF LOCOMOTION FROM THE POINT OF ORIGIN TO THE POINT OF ARRIVAL. A STORY (WORK OF LITERATURE) CONSISTS OF A STARTING POINT, AN END POINT AND THE EPISODES THAT CONNECT THE SPACE BETWEEN THEM, IDENTICAL TO THE COMPONENTS A TRIP IS ORGANIZED INTO. IF I ILLUSTRATE THAT, IT'S LIKE THIS.
JUST THINKING OF IT TERRIFIES ME...
I CAN'T EVEN SPEAK ABOUT IT.
IF PEOPLE DON'T READ IT THEN THE THEME CAN'T BE DIGESTED.
SUPPOSE THAT'S WHAT HAPPENED,
BUT... I HAVE A FEELING THAT... THIS IS GOING TO BORE PEOPLE TO DEATH.
IN SHORT, IF IT WERE TO BE READ THAT WAY, A STORY IS A SYMBOLIC ACT WHICH HOLDS A STRUCTURAL RESEMBLANCE TO TRAVEL, WHICH IS ITS PRACTICAL MANIFESTATION. THEREFORE, I'M THINKING OF DRAWING A THEME ON THE SUBJECT OF THE THEME OF TRAVEL WHICH IS AUTOMATICALLY DIGESTED INTO ANOTHER THEME...
HUH? IS SHE STILL ALIVE?
HUH?
...AND MELON LIQUEUR... FOR ME...
OH, AND WE ALSO NEED BEER, JAPANESE SAKE, AND WHATEVER ELSE YOU SEE THAT WE'RE OUT OF.
OH... WELL...
SEEEN-CHAN.
PLEASE?
WE'RE OUT OF PICKLED VEGETABLES AND PICKLED LEEK...
EXCUSE ME, BUT
THUD
WHOA.. SHE BLEW HER ENTIRE WAD...
I HAVE TO GO TO THE TESTING SITE AND THERE ARE OTHER THINGS I NEED TO GET DONE FOR MY JOB.
AH... TODAY, I...


I'M JUST A LABORER, A LABORER!
ON A COLD DAY LIKE THIS, HOT SAKE IS A NECESSITY!
THAT'S TRUE
I'M WORKING CLASS! FROM A CRAB BOAT! I FORGET OLD ACQUAINTANCES! I'M FULL OF FLAWS! THE SEA OF THE DEAD!
SEN-KUN, YOU CAN BUY WHATEVER YOU LIKE FOR YOURSELF ...
I'M LISTENING...
YAMANOTE.
YES?

BE QUIET.
OH... OKAY...
Ring-ring-ring-ring
Startle
OH, IT'S MINE.

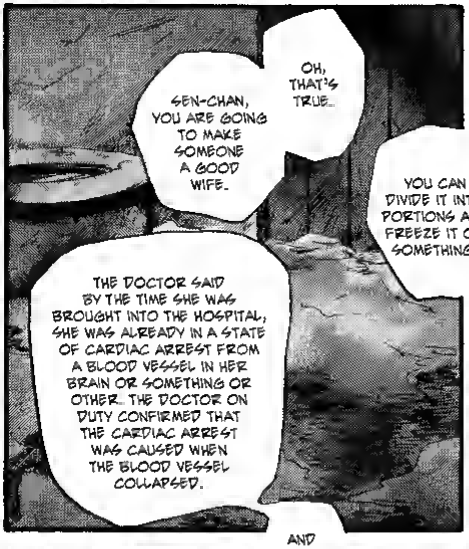
YES, HELLO GOOD WORK TODAY.
WELL... I'D LIKE TO BE COMPENSATED...
WHAT?
OH, YES...

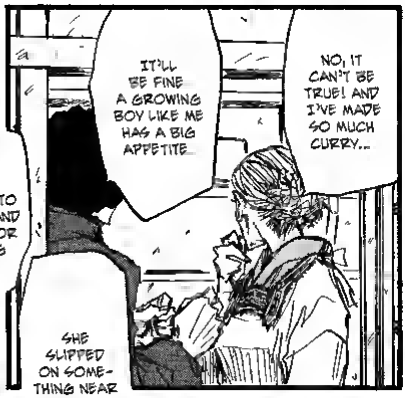
HERE.
Ring-ring-ring-ring-ring-ring-ring-ring

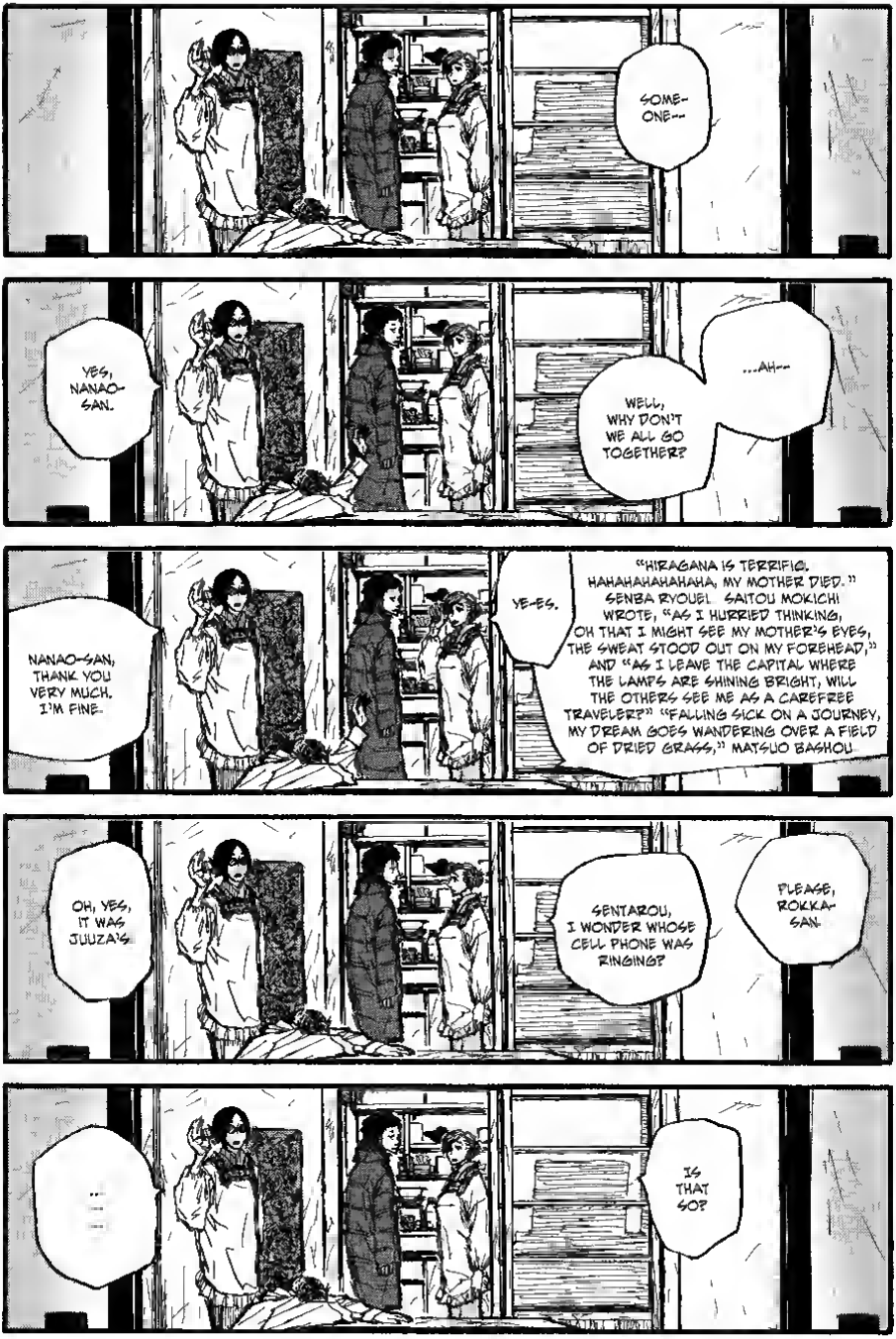
HERE YOU GO.
YES, SO WITH THIS ..
YES.
YES.
YES...

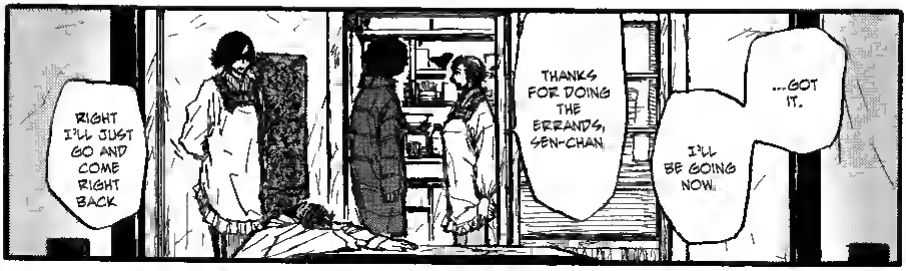
*A BRAND OF JAPANESE CIGARETTES

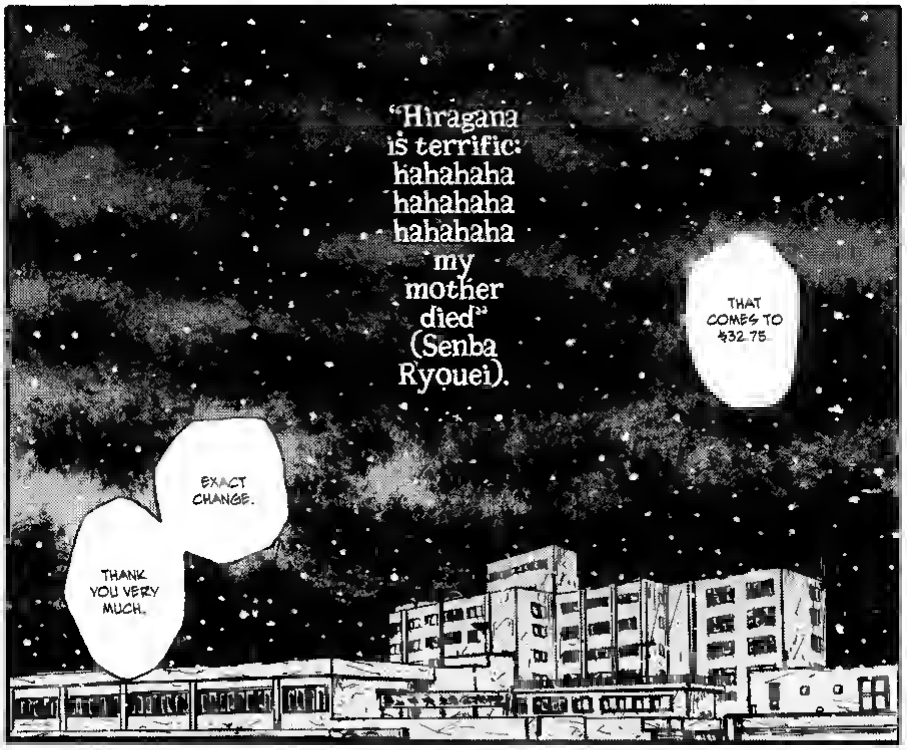
YES. KIRISHIMA CENTRAL GENERAL HOSPITAL, RIGHT? I UNDERSTAND. I'LL HEAD OVER THERE SOON.
HEY-- WHAT ABOUT THE PICKLED VEGETABLES IN SOY SAUCE, AND THE LEEKS, AND THE MELON LIQUEUR?
YES.
AND CIGARETTES, TOO, YAMA.
ALL RIGHT.
NO, PLEASE DON'T CONCERN YOURSELF.
SEVEN STARS*
YES WELL, THEN, GOOD-BYE.
RIGHT.


OH, THAT'S TRUE...
SEN-CHAN, YOU ARE GOING TO MAKE SOMEONE A GOOD WIFE.
YOU CAN DIVIDE IT INTO PORTIONS AND FREEZE IT OR SOMETHING
THE DOCTOR SAID BY THE TIME SHE WAS BROUGHT INTO THE HOSPITAL, SHE WAS ALREADY IN A STATE OF CARDIAC ARREST FROM A BLOOD VESSEL IN HER BRAIN OR SOMETHING OR OTHER. THE DOCTOR ON DUTY CONFIRMED THAT THE CARDIAC ARREST WAS CAUSED WHEN THE BLOOD VESSEL COLLAPSED.


NO, IT CAN'T BE TRUE! AND I'VE MADE SO MUCH CURRY...
IT'LL BE FINE A GROWING BOY LIKE ME HAS A BIG APPETITE...
SHE SLIPPED ON SOMETHING NEAR THE BACK DOOR AND FELL.
AND IT SEEMS SOMEHOW SHE HIT HER HEAD IN JUST THE WRONG PLACE ON A POTTED PLANT OR SOMETHING


SOME-
ONE--
YES,
NANAO-
SAN.
WELL,
WHY DON'T
WE ALL GO
TOGETHER?
...AH--
NANAO-SAN,
THANK YOU
VERY MUCH.
I'M FINE.
YE-ES.
"HIRAGANA IS TERRIFIC. HAHAHAHAHAHAHA, MY MOTHER DIED." SENBA RYOUEI SAITOU MOKICHI WROTE, "AS I HURRIED THINKING, OH THAT I MIGHT SEE MY MOTHER'S EYES, THE SWEAT STOOD OUT ON MY FOREHEAD," AND "AS I LEAVE THE CAPITAL WHERE THE LAMPS ARE SHINING BRIGHT, WILL THE OTHERS SEE ME AS A CAREFREE TRAVELER?" "FALLING SICK ON A JOURNEY, MY DREAM GOES WANDERING OVER A FIELD OF DRIED GRASS," MATSUO BASHOU
OH, YES,
IT WAS
JUUZA'S.
SENTAROU,
I WONDER WHOSE
CELL PHONE WAS
RINGING?
PLEASE,
ROKKA-
SAN.
...
...
...
IS
THAT
SO?


RIGHT I'LL JUST GO AND COME RIGHT BACK
THANKS FOR DOING THE ERRANDS, SEN-CHAN.
I'LL BE GOING NOW.
...GOT IT.


"Hiragana is terrific: hahahaha hahahaha hahahaha my mother died" (Senba Ryouei).
THAT COMES TO ¥32.75.
EXACT CHANGE.
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

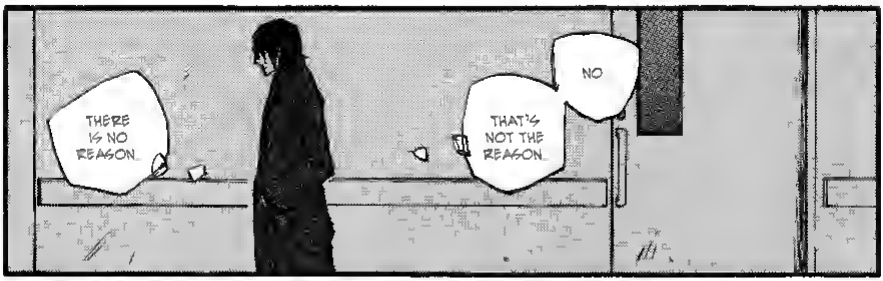
11
AFTER HOURS ADMISSIONS
11
AFTER HOURS ADMISSIONS

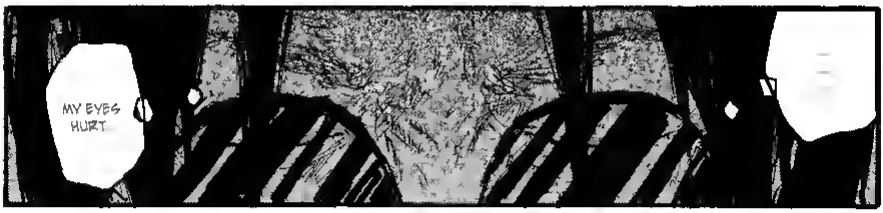
NIGHT ENTRANCE

NO MORE THAN A GHOST...
it appears my mother is...
Sakae Kaikou is dead, and
...I...?
My mother was born, and...
Sakae is dead, and
Juuzen is dead.
MY HEART IS POUND-ING...
I...

DAZZLING

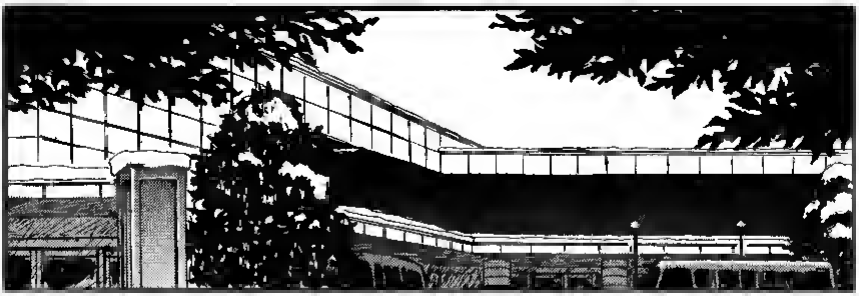
A
GHOST



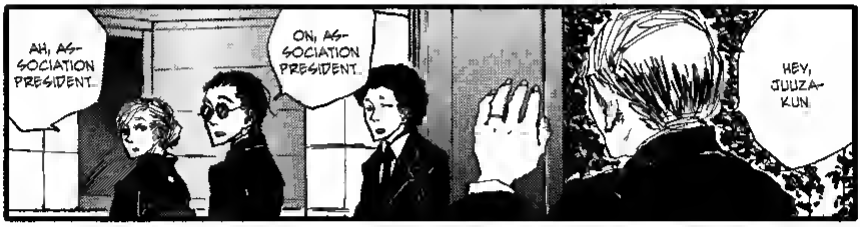


I am made of pain.
The pain will disappear
when I disappear.

I feel as if I'm my own ghost.



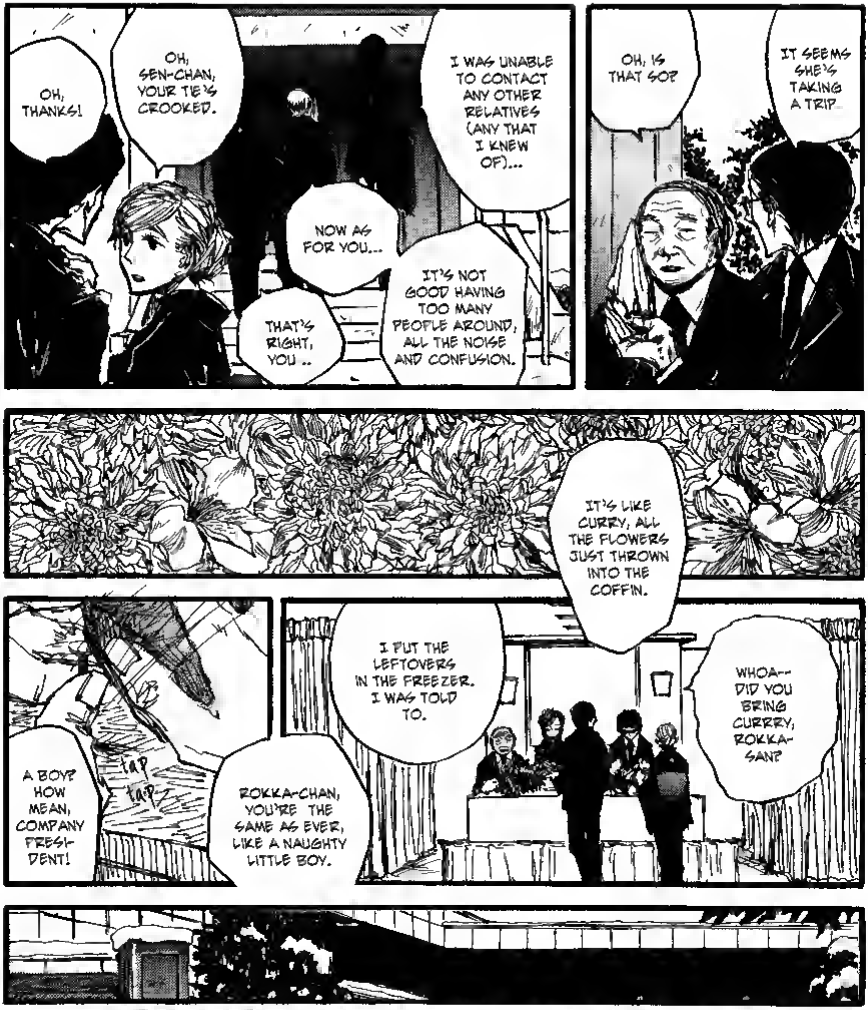
I HEARD THAT THESE DAYS CREMATORIUMS DON'T HAVE SMOKESTACKS.
NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT, I GUESS THAT'S TRUE
SOMETHING'S ALREADY FALLING.
YES, IT IS.


AH, ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT.
OH, ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT.
HEY, JUUZA-KUN

AH, UM, WELL...
HMM NOW THAT I THINK OF IT, WHERE IS NANAO-CHAN?

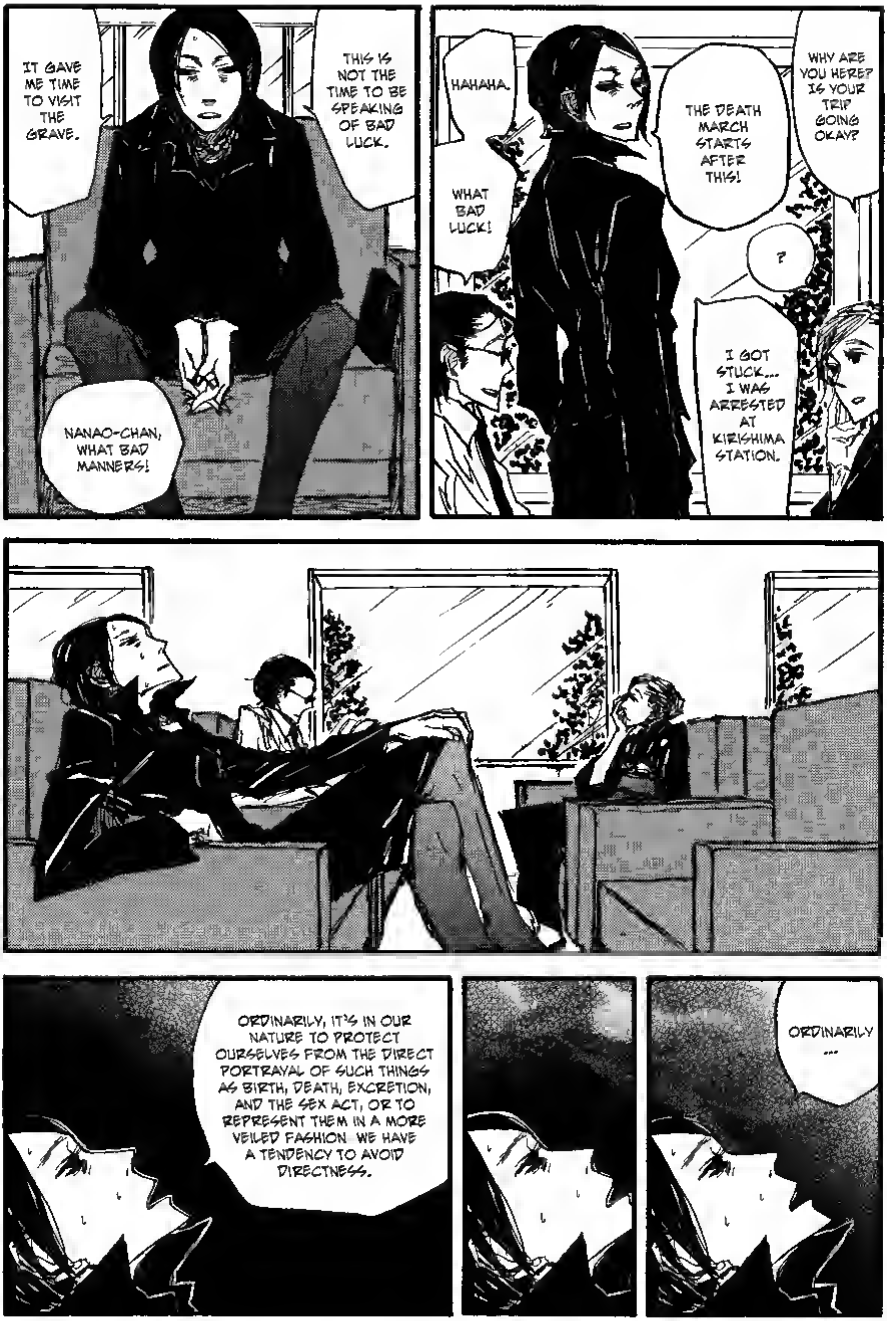
THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TROUBLE OF INVITING ME.
NOT AT ALL. IT WAS NO TROUBLE.

NANAO-SAAAN, ARE YOU AGLEE!?
knock
knock
knock
knock
knock
NANAO-SAAAN, THE TAXI'S HERE--
EXCUSE ME, I'M COMING IN.
ROKKA
I'M LEAVING
DON'T TRY TO FIND ME
NANAO

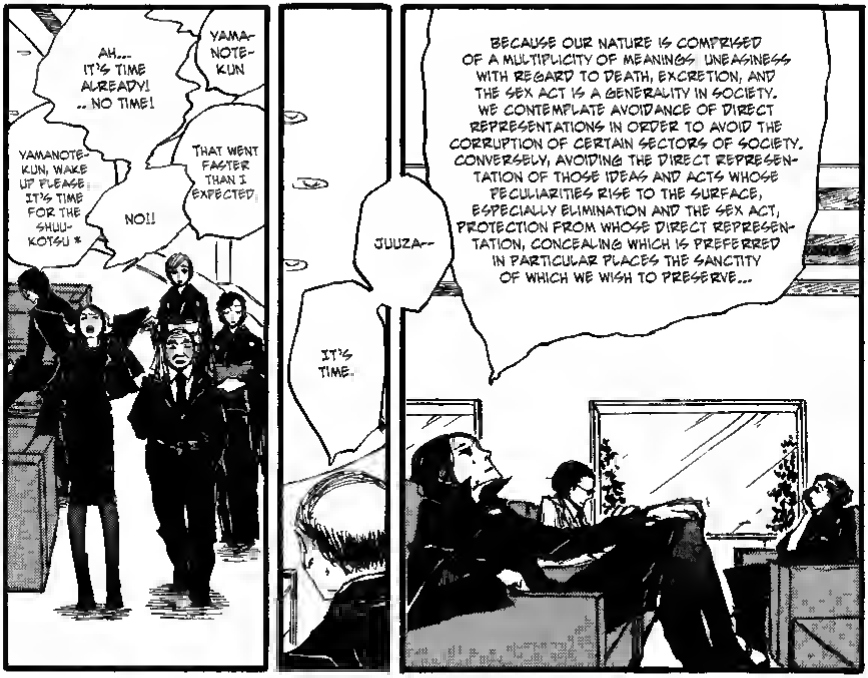

OH, THANKS!
OH, SEN-CHAN, YOUR TIE'S CROOKED.
I WAS UNABLE TO CONTACT ANY OTHER RELATIVES (ANY THAT I KNEW OF)...
NOW AS FOR YOU...
IT'S NOT GOOD HAVING TOO MANY PEOPLE AROUND, ALL THE NOISE AND CONFUSION.
THAT'S RIGHT, YOU ..
OH, IS THAT SO?
IT SEEMS SHE'S TAKING A TRIP.
IT'S LIKE CURRY, ALL THE FLOWERS JUST THROWN INTO THE COFFIN.
I PUT THE LEFTOVERS IN THE FREEZER. I WAS TOLD TO.
WHOA-- DID YOU BRING CURRY, ROKKA-SAN?
A BOY? HOW MEAN, COMPANY PRESI-DENT!
ROKKA-CHAN, YOU'RE THE SAME AS EVER, LIKE A NAUGHTY LITTLE BOY.
WHAT A RUDE BOY!
THAT'S FINE, BUT ROKKA-SAN, YOU WILL CERTAINLY LIVE LONGER THAN ME.
WHEN I DIE, I'D LIKE TO HAVE THE SAME, PLEASE, JUU.
THE CREMATION CEREMONY WAS DIGNIFIED, WITH EVERYTHING OF THE HIGHEST QUALITY-- VERY "WILD BAT FORMAL."*

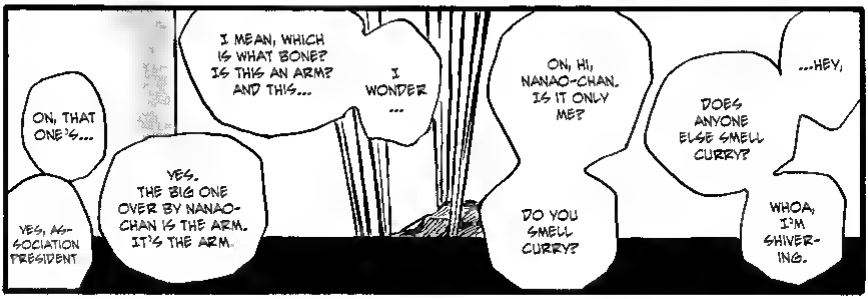
* "WILD BAT FORMAL" WAS THE SLOGAN OF THE TOYOTA HARRIER (LEXUS RX 300 ETC) WHEN IT FIRST WENT ON THE MARKET IN JAPAN.

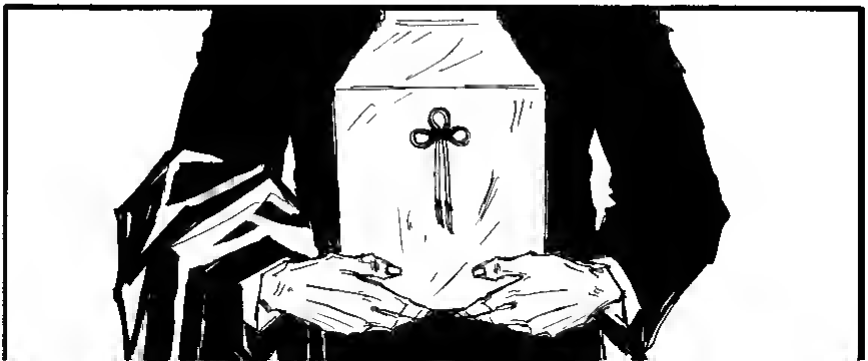
YEAH, I REMEMBER I STAYED AT GRANDMA'S HOUSE A LOT.
HEY, JUUZA.
DO YOU REMEMBER THE CEMETERY BEHIND YOUR GRANDMA'S HOUSE?
SO IT SEEMS.
CREMATORIUMS DON'T USUALLY INSTALL CHIMNEYS ANYMORE.
NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT, YOU SAID SOMETHING ABOUT THAT EARLIER.
HEY, DON'T BOTH OF YOU START IN ON IT.
THERE WAS A CREMATORY THERE WITH A TALL SMOKESTACK.
YES, THERE WAS.
FULL SPEED AHEAD, OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT.
THAT'S NOT TRUE! THERE ARE PROTECTIVE REGULATIONS!
YOU KNOW, ASHES ARE A KNOWN CAUSE OF ILLNESS, BUT EVEN IF THEY CAUSE PROBLEMS, NO ONE PAYS ATTENTION, ISN'T THAT SO?
AREN'T THEY REQUIRED TO DESIGN THEM SO THEY WON'T GIVE OFF SMOKE?
IT'S BECAUSE LATELY A LOT OF FUNERAL HALLS SEEM TO BE GOING UP IN THIS NEIGHBORHOOD.
IN FORMER TIMES, WHEN THE WORLD WAS STILL EGG-SHAPED, ORDINARY PEOPLE WERE CREMATED WITH THE RESULTANT BLACK SMOKE. WHOEVER SAW THE SMOKESTACKS SPEWING OUT THAT BLACK SMOKE WAS AFFECTED TO VARYING DEGREES BY THE THOUGHT OF DEATH AND WAS AROUSED BY THE SIGHT OF THE DEVICE AS A SIDE EFFECT.
HELLO, NANAO-SAN!
THAT'S WHY IT'S NECESSARY THAT THE SYMBOLIC SMOKESTACK WITH ITS BLACK SMOKE MUST BE INVISIBLE.
THESE ARE ALL THINGS THE SELF DOES TO HOLD OFF DEATH, AGAINST WHICH NOTHING CAN BE DONE.
REPRESSION. DENIAL. CONTROL. FLIGHT. ISOLATION. HIDING.
ON, NANAO-CHAN!


IT GAVE ME TIME TO VISIT THE GRAVE.
THIS IS NOT THE TIME TO BE SPEAKING OF BAD LUCK.
NANAO-CHAN, WHAT BAD MANNERS!
HAHAHA.
WHAT BAD LUCK!
THE DEATH MARCH STARTS AFTER THIS!
WHY ARE YOU HERE? IS YOUR TRIP GOING OKAY?
?
I GOT STUCK... I WAS ARRESTED AT KIRISHIMA STATION.
ORDINARILY, IT'S IN OUR NATURE TO PROTECT OURSELVES FROM THE DIRECT PORTRAYAL OF SUCH THINGS AS BIRTH, DEATH, EXCRETION, AND THE SEX ACT, OR TO REPRESENT THEM IN A MORE VEILED FASHION. WE HAVE A TENDENCY TO AVOID DIRECTNESS.
ORDINARILY ...

*SHUUKOTSU IS THE NAME OF THE JAPANESE FUNERARY RITUAL OF PICKING UP THE CREMATED BONES OF THE DEPARTED AND PLACING THEM IN AN URN

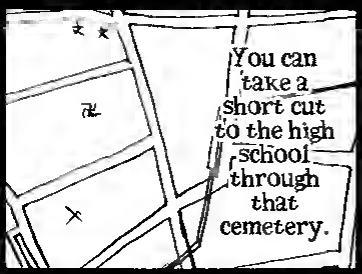

AH... IT'S TIME ALREADY! .. NO TIME!
YAMA-NOTE-KUN
YAMANOTE-KUN, WAKE UP PLEASE. IT'S TIME FOR THE SHUU-KOTSU *
NO!!
THAT WENT FASTER THAN I EXPECTED.
JUUZA--
IT'S TIME.
BECAUSE OUR NATURE IS COMPRISED OF A MULTIPLICITY OF MEANINGS UNEASINESS WITH REGARD TO DEATH, EXCRETION, AND THE SEX ACT IS A GENERALITY IN SOCIETY. WE CONTEMPLATE AVOIDANCE OF DIRECT REPRESENTATIONS IN ORDER TO AVOID THE CORRUPTION OF CERTAIN SECTORS OF SOCIETY. CONVERSELY, AVOIDING THE DIRECT REPRESEN-TATION OF THOSE IDEAS AND ACTS WHOSE PECULIARITIES RISE TO THE SURFACE, ESPECIALLY ELIMINATION AND THE SEX ACT, PROTECTION FROM WHOSE DIRECT REPRESEN-TATION, CONCEALING WHICH IS PREFERRED IN PARTICULAR PLACES THE SANCTITY OF WHICH WE WISH TO PRESERVE...

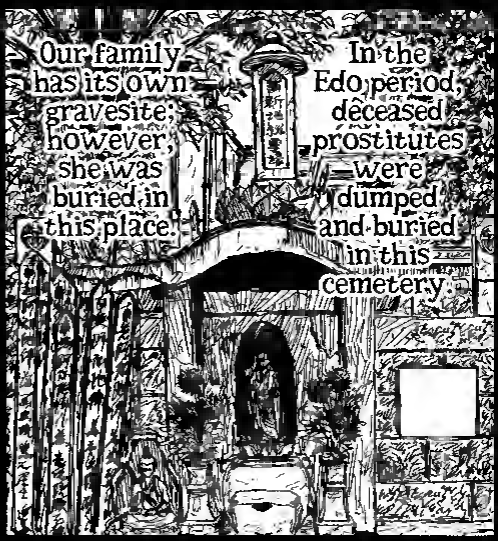

ON, THAT ONE'S...
I MEAN, WHICH IS WHAT BONE? IS THIS AN ARM? AND THIS...
I WONDER ...
ON, HI, NANAO-CHAN. IS IT ONLY ME?
...HEY,
DOES ANYONE ELSE SMELL CURRY?
YES, ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT
YES. THE BIG ONE OVER BY NANAO-CHAN IS THE ARM. IT'S THE ARM.
DO YOU SMELL CURRY?
WHOA, I'M SHIVER-ING.

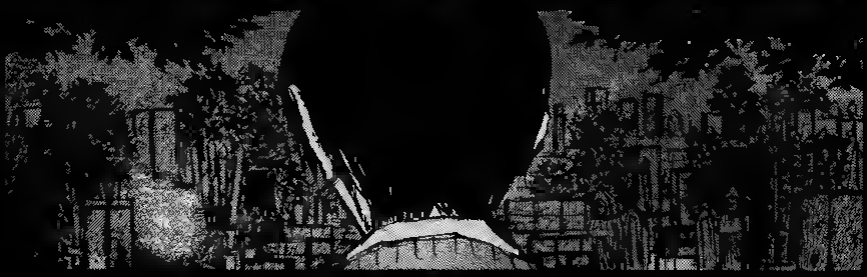


TODAY HAS BEEN SO HECTIC..
LISTEN, LISTEN,
I STILL HAVE MY REGULAR MEETING TO GO TO...
WHY DON'T YOU BURY THEM? IT'S GOOD TO BURY THEM, IF YOU'RE IN DOUBT.
I DON'T KNOW. I DIDN'T HEAR THE TEMPLE PRIEST SAY ANYTHING ABOUT IT.
DO YOU KNOW, NANAO-SAN?
WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH IT?
FOUR TWO SEVEN, FULL CAR, TO SHINCHI MEETING HALL
ROGER.
CERTAINLY!
TO THE SHINCHI NO AKEBA MEETING HALL, PLEASE.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, YAMA? I HAVEN'T SLEPT AT ALL.
AH, I'M SUPER TIRED.
RUMBLE
shift

There is a cemetery on the north side of town.


You can take a short cut to the high school through that cemetery.


Our family has its own gravesite; however, she was buried in this place.
In the Edo period, deceased prostitutes were dumped and buried in this cemetery.



...OR SOMETHING.
A GHOST.
OH.
Pluck
I GOT OUT OF THERE! SERIOUSLY! I REALLY SAW IT!
REALLY?
COULD A GHOST APPEAR IN THE FORM OF DRIED SILVER-GRASS?
It wasn't a lie (maybe).
bounce bounce bounce
YOU'RE LYING!
HAHA.
OH. YOU DON'T BELIEVE ME...!
THE YAMADA PLACE IS REALLY DANGEROUS! SERIOUSLY!
AH, IF THAT'S WHAT YOU MEAN, I SAW IT TOO.

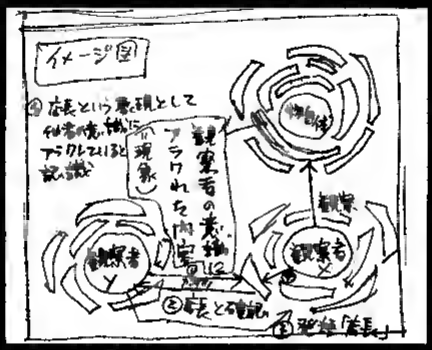
Of those two things, what appeared to me was the phenomenon of silver grass.

Depending on time, place, and situation, however, things may change, and it will no longer be silver grass.

It was the same sort of thing, but it wasn't necessarily the exact same phenomenon as in an actual manifestation.

What appeared to him was a ghost. The only thing that appeared to me was silver grass.

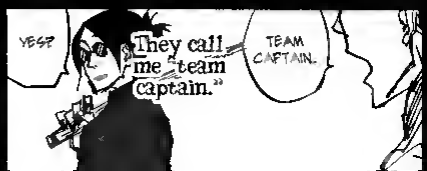
By putting on the company's haori...



Because a thing is called something (is referred to), the thing itself (its reality, its substance, its essence) hides inside its own name.

The act of naming clothes an object in invisibility.

Clothing is one thing— the thing itself is one thing— and the name of the thing itself (the meaning hidden in a generic name)...



Student,
store
manager,
Akane
Shinchi
rustic
inn
company
employee,
kendo
team
captain,
Juuzen,
What's-
his-name--
all of it...
it's only
an invisible
barrier.

NOTE: "ALL OF IT... IT'S ONLY" IS A PLAY ON "JUUZEN" BECAUSE THE SECOND KANJI OF "JUUZEN" AND THE FIRST KANJI OF "SUBETE" OR "ALL" ARE THE SAME.

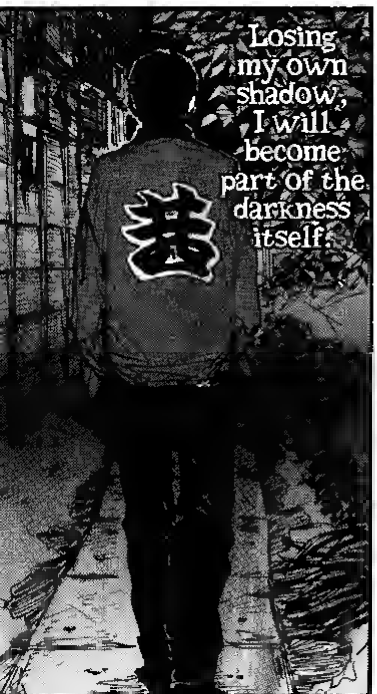
But I will protect Akane Shinchi.
In a year, the student and the team captain will be stripped away.
...za.
Juu...
Because I am Juuzen Whats-his-name, I'm being stripped of my skin, and with Sakae Kaikou I will burn.
We will become black smoke and disappear into nothingness.
THAT'LL BE ¥35, PLEASE.
JUUZA!
JUUZA, WE'RE HERE.
SHAKE
SHAKE
SHAKE
From what?
OH, SORRY. UM, HERE'S ¥40 BUCKS.
Bits of conversation...
THAT'S ¥5 IN CHANGE.
oooooooooooooooooo

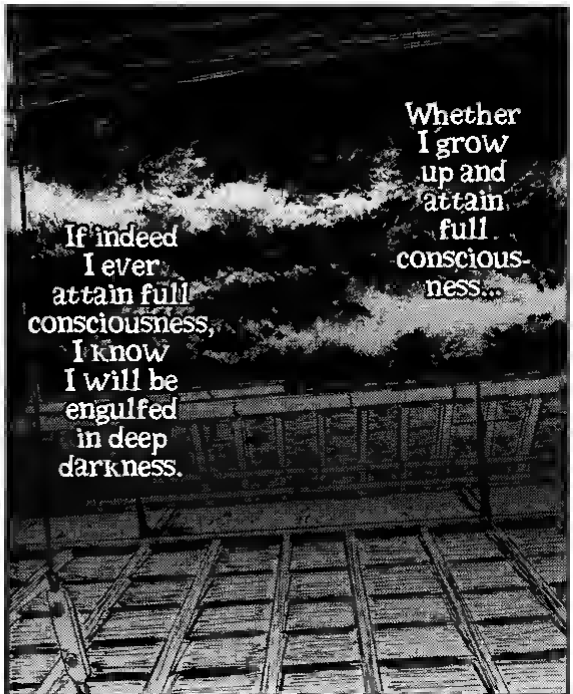
YOU WERE HAVING A NIGHTMARE, JUUZA.
Exposing my thoughts brings mayhem.
THAT RIGHT?
BUT I WAS AWAKE THE WHOLE TIME.
TOO DISGUST-ING.
I'M HOME.
'ELCOME 'ACK.
IT STINKS OF CURRY!
WELL, YAMA-NOTE-KUN!
TODAY IS THE FIRST, SO LET'S TRY OUR HARDEST!
EH...!?
I'LL PUT THIS HERE FOR THE TIME BEING, OKAY?

I OVER-SLEPT.
Pitt
I'M HELLA SLEEPY ...
YES, WHAT IS IT?
STORE MANAGER KAIKOU.
I'M DONE ...!
IT'S—
REALLY?
YES! I PASSED!
I GUESS ...
RIGHT?
HEY, THERE'S A REAL WORKING PERSON!
SHE'S SAYING "I'M DONE?" ISN'T THAT THE STRAIGHT-FORWARD WAY OF THE WAYFARER WHEN HE'S DONE RAPING THE SERVING GIRL?
YES! THANK YOU! I THINK WE'VE COVERED IT ALL!
TODAY I'M GOING TO BRING TWO BACK!
TAKE CARE, YUMI-CHAN.

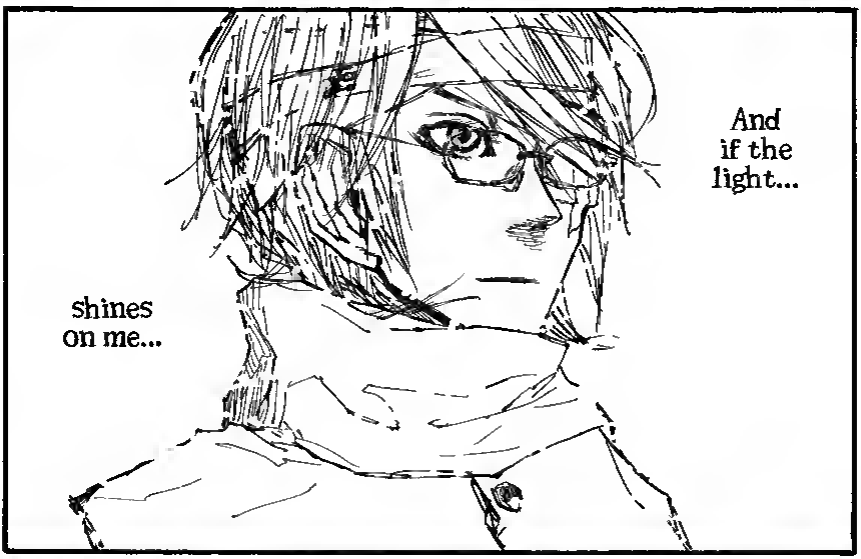
WE'LL CLOSE UP QUICKLY.
YES, YOU'RE RIGHT.
AS EXPECTED, IT'S START-ING TO GET CHILLY...

NOT ONLY THAT, BUT IT'S PITCH BLACK OUT.


Losing my own shadow, I will become part of the darkness itself.


If indeed I ever attain full consciousness, I know I will be engulfed in deep darkness.
Whether I grow up and attain full consciousness...

And if the light...


And if the light...
shines on me...

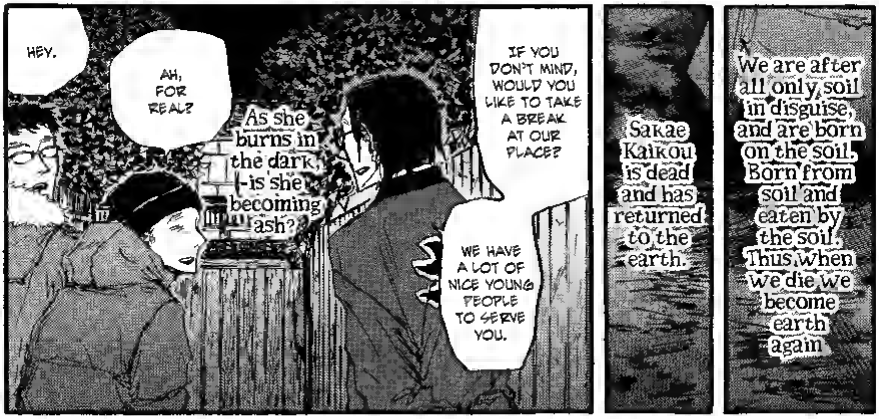
Without a trace.
I will disappear.

STORE
MANAGER--
OH!
I'M SORRY, DID I STARTLE YOU?
OH, NO, IT'S OKAY.
I WAS JUST A LITTLE SURPRISED.
I WAS SPACING OUT A LITTLE.
THEY ALL HAVE COLDS, AND I'M JUST IN EVERYONE'S WAY.
NOT JUST A LITTLE! YOU WERE SUPER-SPACED OUT!
OH, I'M SORRY!
THAT SURPRISES ME.
HM.
TODAY AT THIS TIME, YOU SHOULD BE SOMEPLACE WARM, SHOULDN'T YOU?
POOR, POOR YOU!
EEK!

BUT IF YOU GET TOO COLD, COME BACK INSIDE, ALL RIGHT?
YOU GOT IT!
HAHAHA.
THEY SAID THINGS LIKE, THERE REALLY ISN'T ANY MONEY,
WELL, THEN, DO YOUR BEST BRINGING IN CLIENTS!
AND THEY WERE WORRIED I'D GET THEIR COLD AS WELL.
THANKS, I WILL.
Exposing me...
Shining on me...
Not knowing how to become a person, I put on clothing to be made reference to; to become someone.
Not knowing my own true self, I have to put on the skin of a person to become a person.
Touching me... Someone...
touching me...
My soul...

Living an unreal reality
Hiding in the red light district, gone to earth in my burrow.
Excluded, isolated, from the city, from society.
I will protect myself!
Might as well thoroughly clothe myself in Akane Shinchi
to protect myself
I will protect myself!!
FROM WHAT?
My thoughts keep slipping away...
A COMPLETE IDIOT!
TSK!
WHOA!
OH... SERIOUS.. SERIOUSLY, IS IT POSSIBLE?
WAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA!
A sewer rat strike?

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
Going blind, going deaf...
Is my body going to ashes?
YOU'LL GET COVERED IN MUD.
HEY, HEY, HEY, DON'T SIT THERE.
Stop! Stop!
OW.

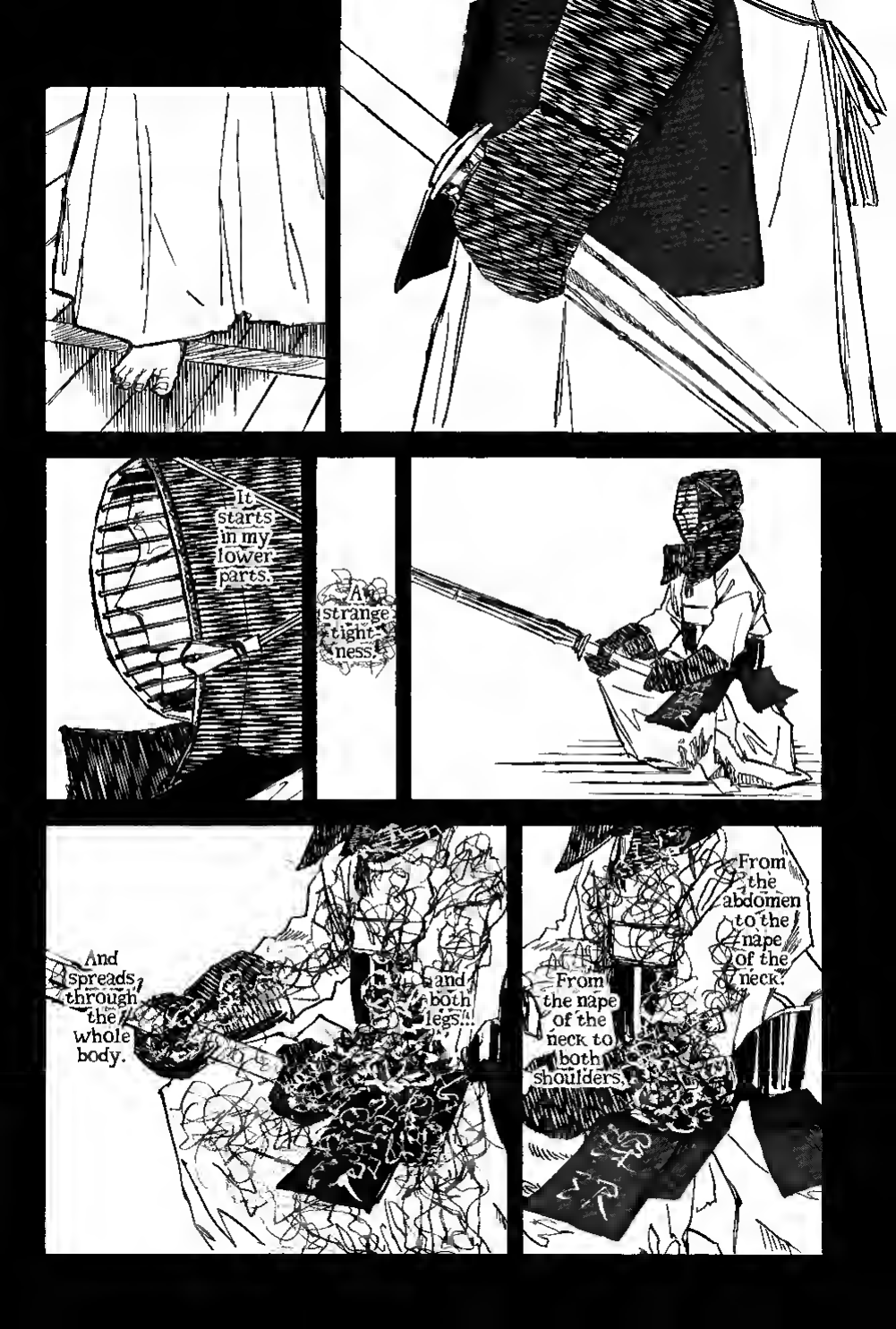

HEY.
AH, FOR REAL?
As she burns in the dark, -is she becoming ash?
IF YOU DON'T MIND, WOULD YOU LIKE TO TAKE A BREAK AT OUR PLACE?
WE HAVE A LOT OF NICE YOUNG PEOPLE TO SERVE YOU.
Sakae Kaikou is dead and has returned to the earth.
We are after all only soil in disguise, and are born on the soil. Born from soil and eaten by the soil. Thus when we die we become earth again

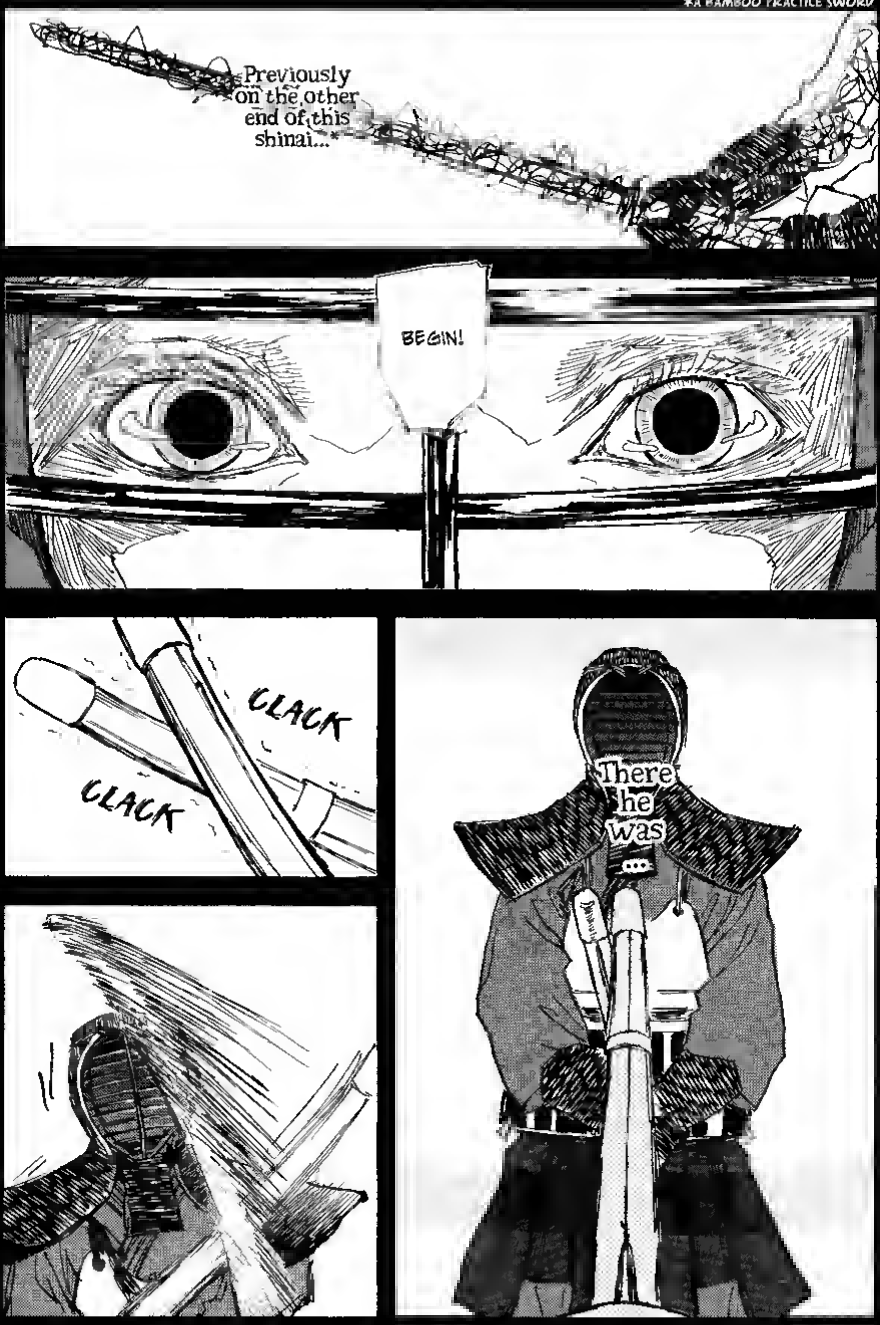
Today as always I am enthusiastically selling flowers.
Worth-less senti-mental-ity.
ARE YOU AN IDIOT?
Even if she becomes ash, when she returns to the earth. If she can cause even one flower to bloom...
HOW MANY? CAN I HAVE AS MANY AS I LIKE?

TAN: IN ORDER TO GAIN A POINT, AMONG OTHER REQUIREMENTS, THE KENDOKA MUST LOUDLY CALL OUT THE TARGET THAT HE IS STRIKING. THE TARGETS ARE NOT TRANSLATED, AS EVEN IN THE U.S. THE JAPANESE TERMS ARE USED FOR THE KENDO TARGETS.
*FACE MASK
**CHEST PROTECTOR.

TAN: THE LEAN SHAMPAN OR REFEREE CALLS OUT THE TARGET WHEN THERE IS A SUCCESSFUL POINT TO KNOW WHICH KENDOKA MET THE POINT. YOU MUST SEE THE SHAMPAN RAISE ONE OF THE FLAG OF ONE OPPONENT OR THE OTHER.
***THE RED FLAG RAISES MEANS A POINT ON THE CHEST PROTECTOR.

**** THERE IS VICTORY AND DEFEAT. THE HEAD SHAMPAN CALLS THIS OUT WHEN ONE OPPONENT WINS A SECOND POINT, WINNING THE MATCH


It starts in my lower parts.
A strange tightness.
And spreads through the whole body.
and both legs!!!
From the nape of the neck to both shoulders.
From the abdomen to the nape of the neck.

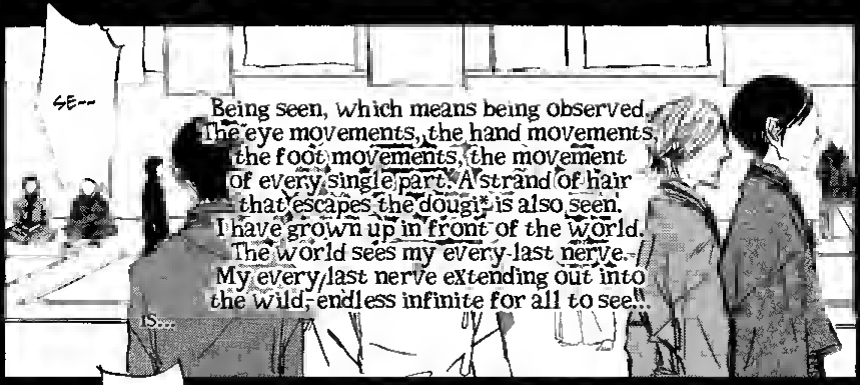

*A BAMBOO PRACTICE SWORD
Previously on the other end of this shinai...*
BEGIN!
CLACK
CLACK
There he was

DOU
ARI!!!

BAM
BEGIN!
MEN!
SLASH
BAM
BAM
BAM

MEN!!
スパン
MEN ARI!!!
SHOBU ARI!!!
IT WAS AN EASY VICTORY!
WELL DONE, FUKAZAWA!!
FUKUZAWA, COME TO OUR HIGH SCHOOL!
Pat
Pat
YOU'VE MADE YOUR SENSEI HAPPY.

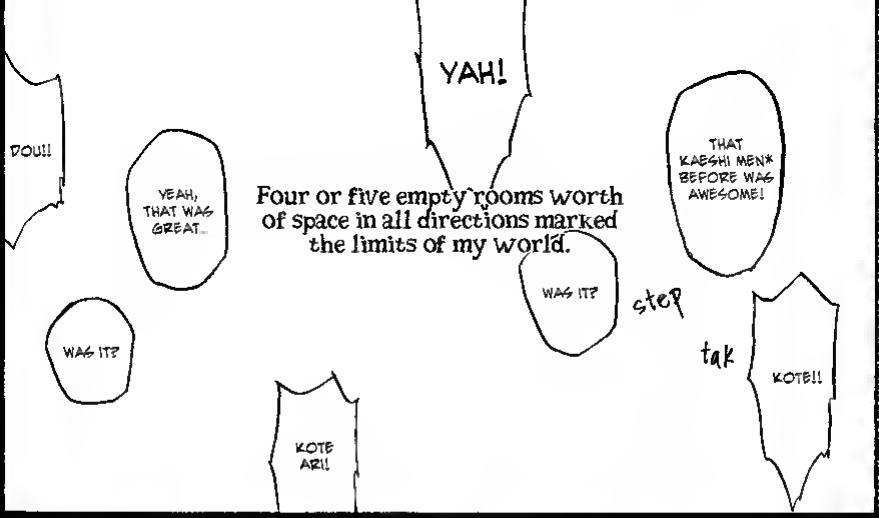
For the whole world to see...
FUKA-ZAWA.
OH, NO, NOT ES-PECIALLY ...
HEY FUKA-ZAWA IS SOME-THING WRONG?
THANK YOU.
THAT'S RIGHT. I'D COM-PLETELY FOR-GOTTEN ABOUT THEM.
OH.
I WAS AT THE OFFICE, SO I PICKED THESE UP FOR YOU.
YOUR GLASSES
CON-GRATULA-TIONS ON THE CHAMP-IONSHIP.


SE--
Being seen, which means being observed. The eye movements, the hand movements, the foot movements, the movement of every single part. A strand of hair that escapes the dougi* is also seen. I have grown up in front of the world. The world sees my every-last nerve. My every-last nerve extending out into the wild, endless infinite for all to see...
IS...

...protected only by a thin membrane.

KOTE. **

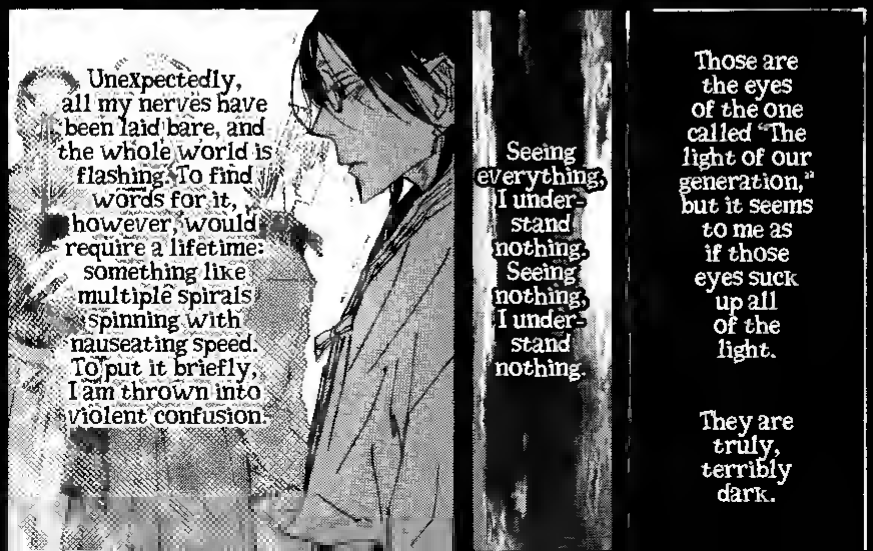
* A PADDED UNDERSHIRT WORN FOR PRACTICING KENDO
** A PADDED GLOVE USED IN KENDO. ANOTHER TARGET



* THE TERM FOR BLOCKING AND COUNTERING A BLOW WITH THE MEN.

** ONE OF THE FIVE STANCES OF KENDO. IT MEANS TO HOLD THE SWORD BEHIND YOU WITH ONLY THE FOREARM SHOWING TO YOUR OPPONENT. IT ISN'T USED MUCH IN COMPETITION, BECAUSE ITS MAIN USE IS TO CONCEAL THE LENGTH OF THE SWORD. OBVIOUSLY, THE LENGTH OF SWORDS IN COMPETITION IS STANDARDIZED.

NO... NISHINA-KAJIMA-SENPAI'S MATCH IS COMING UP.


Unexpectedly, all my nerves have been laid bare, and the whole world is flashing. To find words for it, however, would require a lifetime: something like multiple spirals spinning with nauseating speed. To put it briefly, I am thrown into violent confusion.
Seeing everything, I understand nothing. Seeing nothing, I understand nothing.
Those are the eyes of the one called "The light of our generation," but it seems to me as if those eyes suck up all of the light.
They are truly, terribly dark.

I can't move, whether from pain or from emotion. Whatever it is drags on me like a lead weight. I need to get away from here.

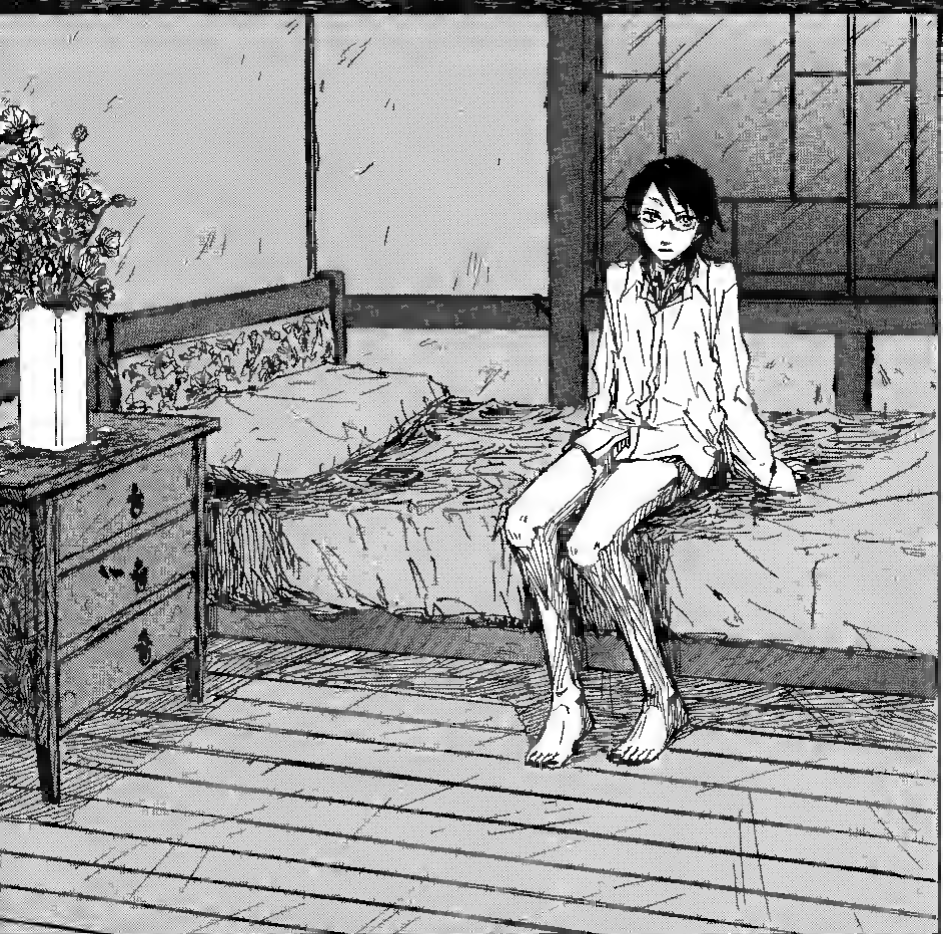
Glittering in the dark, everything was alive; even the air and the light were alive and had a certain viscosity. They wound around me. Gravity pulled on me. I became heavy. My pulse rate rose precipitously.

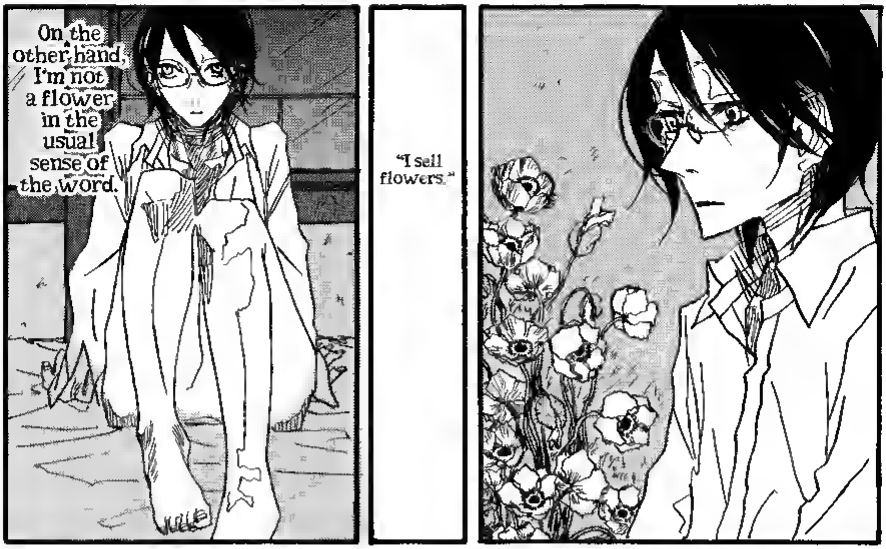
My whole body felt flushed, but my face grew pale. My body temperature was falling (that was of course why my complexion was so strange). There was a burning sensation in my chest and stomach. My fingers and toes were painfully cold. My throat was dry, but at the same time I was choked with saliva. My chest felt like it was being crushed, and my breathing became very painful. My muscles stiffened involuntarily, and my fingers trembled.

NO, I'M FINE.

LET'S GO.

YOUR FACE IS WHITE. DO YOU NEED TO GO TO THE INFIRMARY?

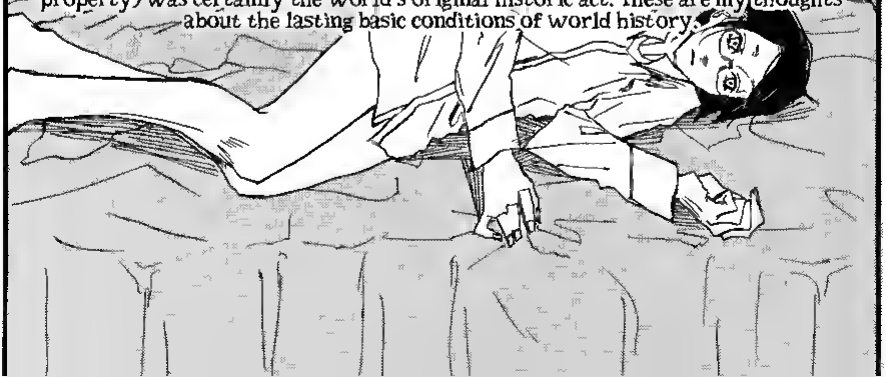


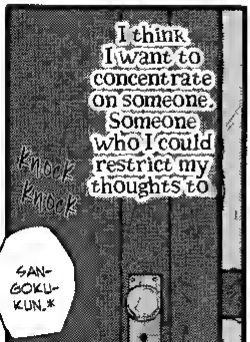


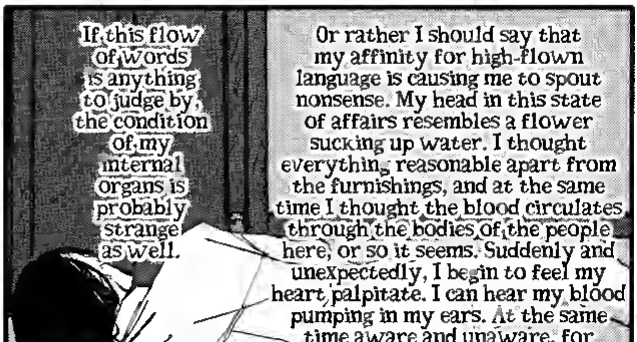
In this room, where sexual acts are performed, sex is called "flowers." It's a sort of metaphor. I came as a visitor with the aim of participating in sexual acts; selling products, or, perhaps I should say, a sequence of activities called selling flowers, or perhaps I should say both at the same time (although you could almost read it as a death metaphor). It is difficult to ascertain with precision, but I am in a roughly seven- or eight-tatami room of an establishment dedicated to the performance of sex acts. This facility has been provided with furniture; it's here that I'm to entertain a partner who will be assigned to me, who I hope will similarly be provided with a decent character. How many rooms like this are arranged in this establishment?

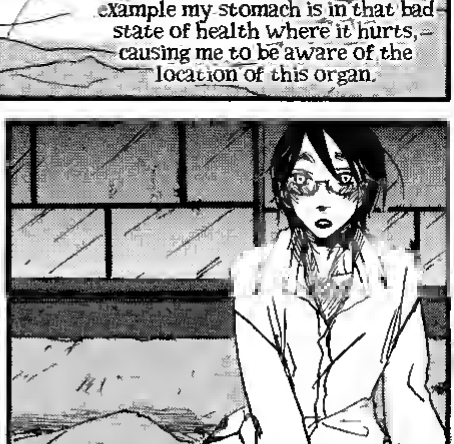
How many such establishments are there in this area? This area was called the "flower district" in the Edo period, when this was an inn town. Since the town's growth, its appearance has changed, and while the town flourished, this area went out of fashion. In the Taishou era, red light district regulations were put into place, and such establishments gathered in a newly-opened district.

The sex industry hides within the limits of that free zone. The town appeared unconcerned on the face of things; however it was noticed who was entering the area. In the end economic activity was prohibited in the zone. Furthermore, society was not forming, and it was viewed as a failure. Since historical materialism would say, the manufacture of materials (documents of daily life--acquisition of physical property) was certainly the world's original historic act. These are my thoughts about the lasting basic conditions of world history.



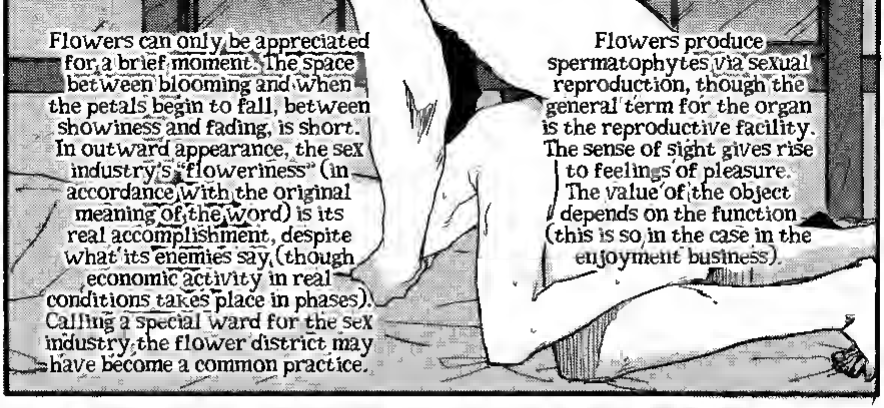



If this flow of words is anything to judge by, the condition of my internal organs is probably strange as well.
Or rather I should say that my affinity for high-flown language is causing me to spout nonsense. My head in this state of affairs resembles a flower sucking up water. I thought everything reasonable apart from the furnishings, and at the same time I thought the blood circulates through the bodies of the people here, or so it seems. Suddenly and unexpectedly, I begin to feel my heart palpitate. I can hear my blood pumping in my ears. At the same time aware and unaware, for example my stomach is in that bad state of health where it hurts, – causing me to be aware of the location of this organ.

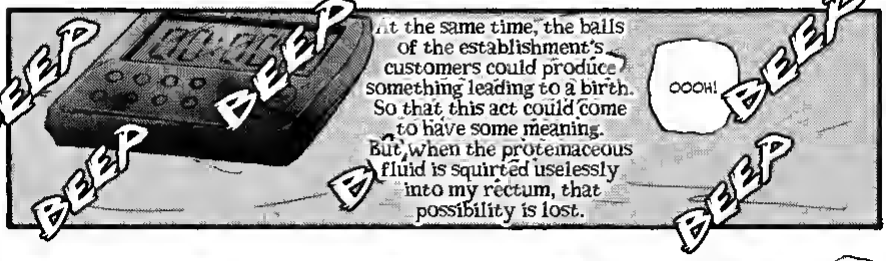


*FUKAZAWA'S ALIAS (SANGOKU OR THREE KINGDOMS) MAY REFER EITHER TO THE ANCIENT CHINESE HISTORICAL NOVEL "THE ROMANCE OF THE THREE KINGDOMS" OR TO THE ALLIANCE OF THE DAIMYOS OF THE IMAGAWA HOJO AND TAKEDA CLANS DURING THE JAPANESE FEUDAL PERIOD. MANY OF THE NAMES OF THE DENIZENS OF AKANE SHINCHI ARE BASED ON NUMBERS SANGOKU (THREE) JUUYA (TEN) KOKKA (SIX) NANAO (SEVEN) AND SEN-CHAN (A THOUSAND).

As water circulates through a flower, I wonder whether or not you can hear it. I'm thinking instead of being aware of what you might call the flow of words circulating. There might be some flowers nearby. I am a flower selling flowers.
I'M OFTEN TOLD THAT.
YOUR SKIN IS SO WHITE.

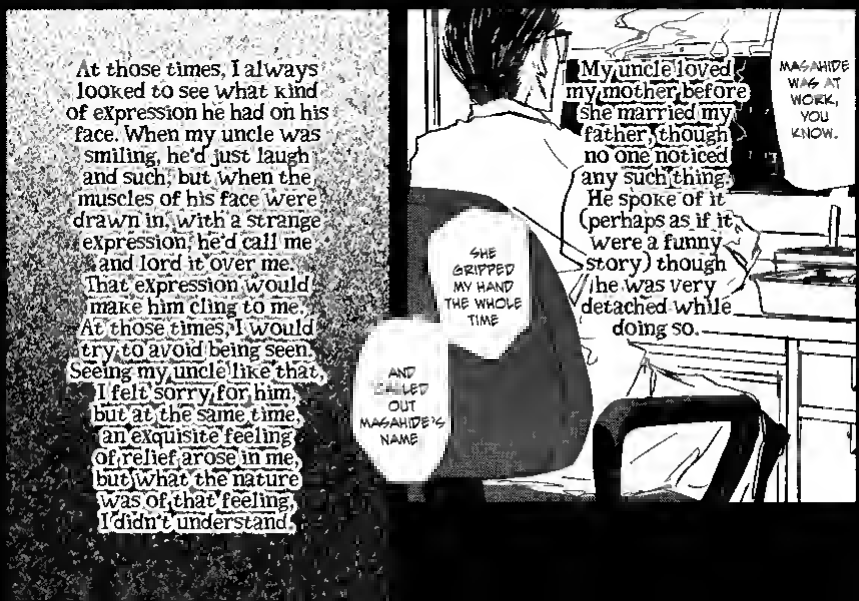

Flowers can only be appreciated for a brief moment. The space between blooming and when the petals begin to fall, between showiness and fading, is short. In outward appearance, the sex industry's "floweriness" (in accordance with the original meaning of the word) is its real accomplishment, despite what its enemies say, (though economic activity in real conditions takes place in phases). Calling a special ward for the sex industry the flower district may have become a common practice.
Flowers produce spermatophytes via sexual reproduction, though the general term for the organ is the reproductive facility. The sense of sight gives rise to feelings of pleasure. The value of the object depends on the function (this is so in the case in the enjoyment business).

The connection is easy to make with meaningless words, that is, the worthless secretions that come gushing out from our brain and our nerves, flowing and then evaporating.
To call it something like a play on words is inappropriate and bullshit.


BEEP
BEEP
BEEP
BEEP
At the same time, the balls of the establishment's customers could produce something leading to a birth. So that this act could come to have some meaning. But, when the protemaceous fluid is squirted uselessly into my rectum, that possibility is lost.
OOOH!
BEEP
BEEP

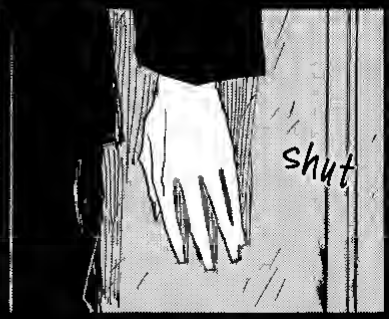
...I'M OFTEN TOLD THAT
YOU'RE SO WHITE.

YOUR SKIN IS SO WHITE IT'S ALMOST TRANS-PARENT
MY SISTER-IN-LAW ...
YOUR MOTHER WAS A TRULY BEAUTIFUL WOMAN.
HER MORNING SICKNESS WAS HORRIBLE.
I almost always ended up having sex with my uncle. He seemed to like to talk about my mother.
My mother died soon after I was born. My father was in the Maritime Self-Defense Force, on a submarine. He was almost never at home. My grandparents had already gone to the next life. So I was in the care of my father's younger brother.
YOURS WAS A VERY DIFFICULT DELIVERY.


At those times, I always looked to see what kind of expression he had on his face. When my uncle was smiling, he'd just laugh and such, but when the muscles of his face were drawn in, with a strange expression, he'd call me and lord it over me. That expression would make him cling to me. At those times, I would try to avoid being seen. Seeing my uncle like that, I felt sorry for him, but at the same time, an exquisite feeling of relief arose in me, but what the nature was of that feeling, I didn't understand.
My uncle loved my mother before she married my father, though no one noticed any such thing. He spoke of it (perhaps as if it were a funny story) though he was very detached while doing so.
MASAHIDE WAS AT WORK, YOU KNOW.
SHE GRIPPED MY HAND THE WHOLE TIME
AND CALLED OUT MASAHIDE'S NAME

ALL RIGHT. BE CAREFUL GOING HOME
I'M GOING HOME SOON.
UNCLE.
My uncle was bisexual, and he was also a pedophile.
The reason my uncle depended on me was because I resembled my mother.
I wasn't his own child, but he loved me enormously (in the sexual sense), and he brought me up with care.
NO, I WASN'T LOOKING WHERE I WAS GOING.
It's not worth worrying about.
He was probably trying to have a second- or third-hand relationship with her. Or there might have been no connection. Whichever it was, it was all the same to me.
SORRY; I LEFT YOU TO MANAGE YOUR CLOTHES ON YOUR OWN.
THUMP
I found the establishment in the shadow of the lights from a pachinko parlor. It was called something I'd read or heard somewhere.
Or rather, something that I remembered by accident.
BESIDES, IT'S THE KIND OF THING I'M ALWAYS DOING.
ACT OF VIOLENCE
HEY-- WHERE DO YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING?
{AS USUAL}

WELL THEN, I'LL BE GOING


shut

Going home always made me nervous.

While in that void, while angrily running along, things got away from me. I lost my heart, I became separated from it, because of these things ("Jinsei," Natsume Souseki).

In the shadow of the light from the pachinko parlor, I don't remember whether I could or couldn't.

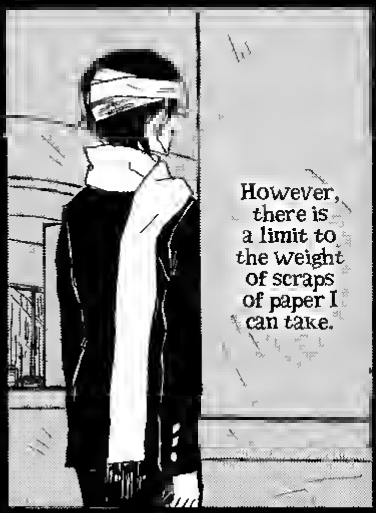
However, exposed to my uncle's eyes, I am completely in shadow. The idea of existing without a soul grew stronger and stronger.

Why do I do these things; how did it get to be like this? I have no clue at all; my mood is naturally like this. By breathing, I'll bury it. I can probably bury it if I breathe.

With that kind of thought suddenly coming to mind, that moment with that thought, based as it is on spurious intuitions and emotions, in the absolute bottom of my heart, is buried deep in the very depths, which means, I buried them. Which means that they are buried. Under layer upon layer, they are buried. In conclusion, I buried them under loads of blank paper, that is to say something along the lines of there being no heart to work on, something I learned I don't know when.

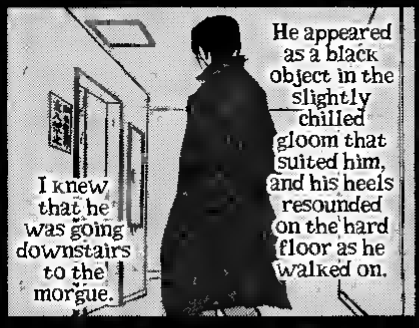
My uncle's eyes cut through the void, and passed right through me, fixing themselves only on my mother.

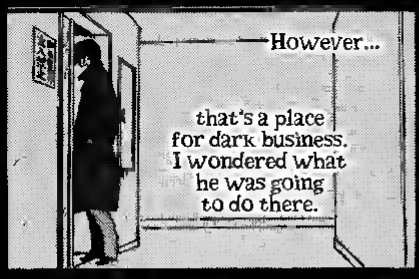
I am separated from these things, I'm losing my heart, and while I'm losing it, it disappears in the fog like a speck. The light diffuses aimlessly, and I'm completely lost in whiteness.



However, there is a limit to the weight of scraps of paper I can take.

That's when I realized he'd looked over his shoulder.
It was filled with flesh and blood. Some meaningless person's leather bag.
It dispersed, and his silhouette filled out.
I felt the movement.
The air became thick.


He appeared as a black object in the slightly chilled gloom that suited him, and his heels resounded on the hard floor as he walked on.
I knew that he was going downstairs to the morgue.



I felt like I was eternally falling.

An experience that was like death.

It was so pure that I was [illegible] to speak.

And even though it was death, and in reality it was not a planned meeting, I felt his spirit was light and simple.

I can still hear the echoes of his footsteps in my mind.
There's a noise in the dark as I enter the gate.
SLAM
THUD
THUD
THUD
THUD
crunch
crunch
crunch
crunch

about
to
shake.
The
earth
was

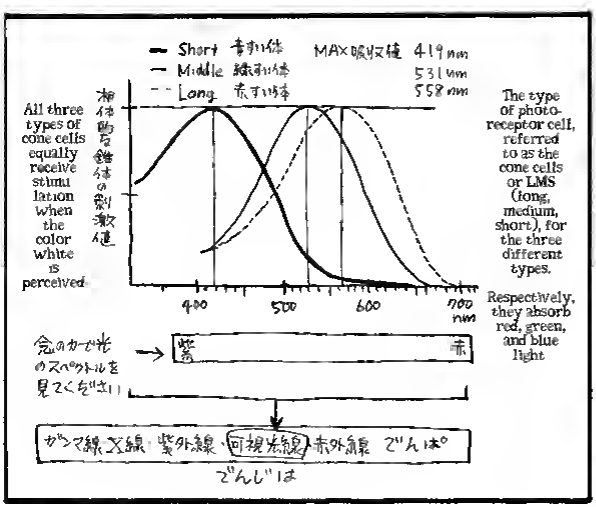
My uncle was inside a dark monument. My father was at the bottom of the dark sea. My mother was under the dark earth. These dark affairs were buried deep in tombs. Death was in there with them. That's how I managed to go on living.
Death is natural. We are able to live because death exists.
There I spotted a huge tombstone.
The snow is changing. It is tinted by a strange, white light.
As I thought...
Who will die?
Who will live?
And I? Where am I?
I was exposed to death. Mortal life watches death's spectacle. Seeing death, life shines more brightly. Death reflects life. Whatever in this world lives, also dies. There is life, and there is also death. All things that exist are embodied. Life and death are two sides of one page. And each of us is made the same.
But at the same time
unpleasant beads of sweat are rolling down from my armpits.
It's cold to the point of stinging and becoming painful.
The snow is emitting a dull, weak white light which dazzles my eyes.

I'LL JUST PUT THE MONEY HERE.

HUH? FELL ASLEEP, DID YOU?

Shut

White...



The type of photo-receptor cell, referred to as the cone cells or LMS (long, medium, short), for the three different types.

Respectively, they absorb red, green, and blue light

—is the name of a color, a color of the variety to stimulate the sense of sight. In consequence of the disparity in the light waves that constitute the spectrum, a distinction is made by the senses, light being a type of electromagnetic waves, principally as visible rays. Visible rays are electromagnetic waves in the range of 380 to 780 nanometers wavelength. The visible rays shine in on the sensory organs (that is, the eyeballs) and on their component parts, one being the retina, the sensory cells react, and the neurons transport the rays as an electrical signal, and the brain then translates the signal and recognizes this sensory input, which is called a color

Consequently, when all of the wavelengths in the visible spectrum are equally present, then we see white light. (When all of the wavelengths in the visible spectrum are equally present, the brain's receptor cells perceive them to be the color called "white.")
In other words, a light shining on an object that includes close to 100% of all of the wavelengths in the visible spectrum in this case will reflect onto the eyeball approximately all of the wavelengths of the visible spectrum; at the same time it will shine on all three types of cone cells and stimulate them; this object will be seen and perceived to be white.
slump
Everything in this world may not be of equal value.
This world is white.
That's what I'm trying to say.

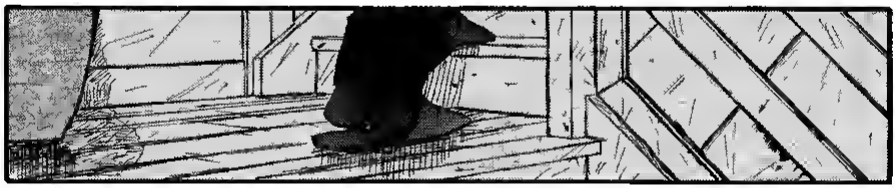
I am nothing

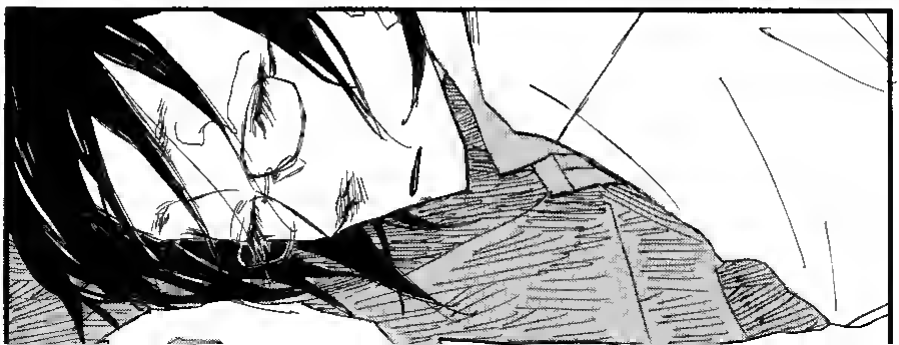
in the eternity of this world...

nor can I

do anything

in this vastness all by myself.





My meaning has been illuminated.
And it was by him alone that it was illuminated.

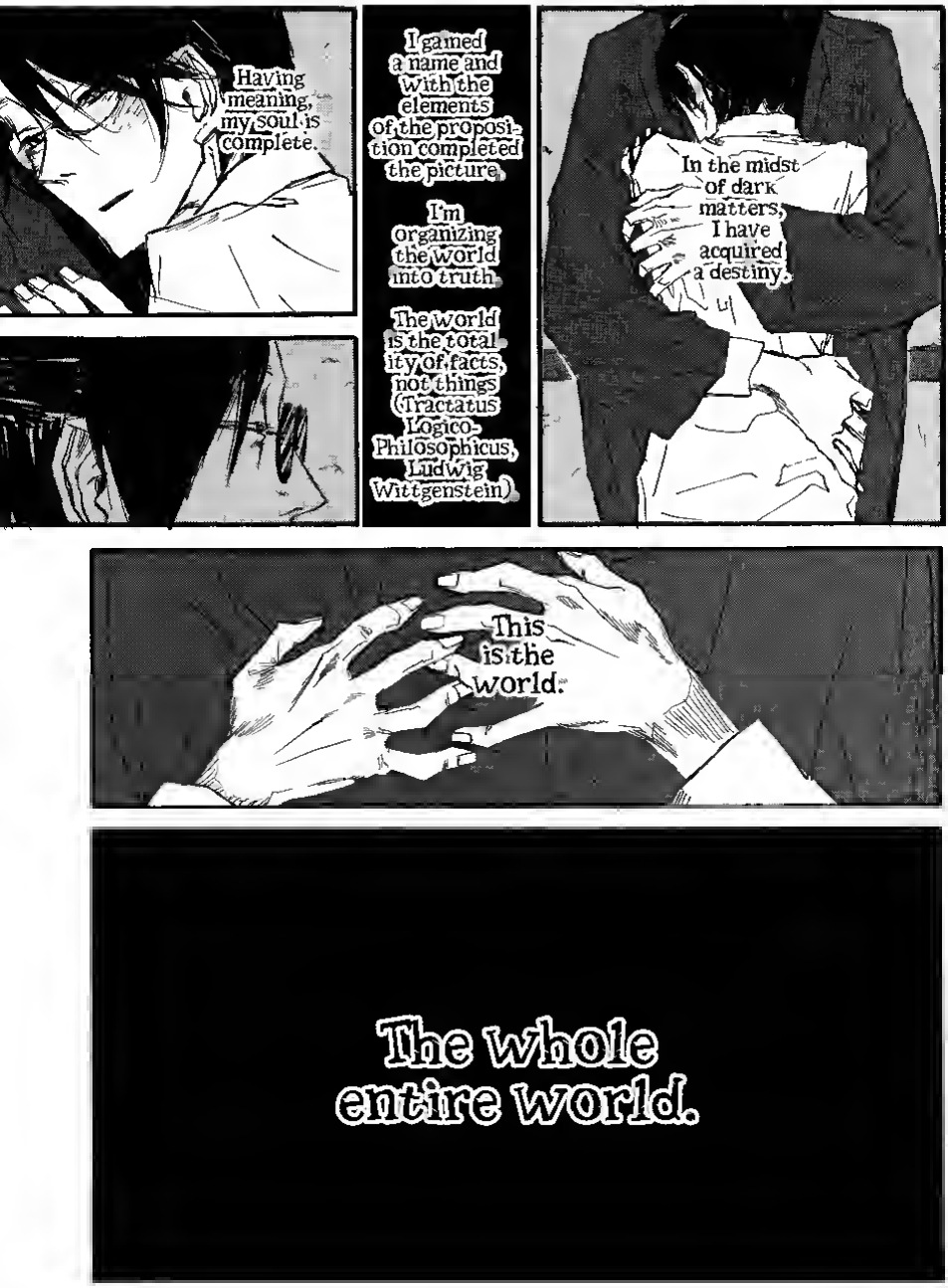
He is able to shine in the darkness.
GOOD WORK TODAY, FUKAZAWA-KUN.
YOU'RE DONE FOR THE DAY.

WHAT IS IT?
thump
WAH!

SENP...
!

I'M FINE
I HAVE CONFIDENCE IN MY PHYSICAL STRENGTH.

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
YOU HAD A LOT OF CUSTOMERS TODAY, DIDN'T YOU?


Having meaning, my soul is complete.
I gained a name and with the elements of the proposition completed the picture.
I'm organizing the world into truth.
The world is the totality of facts, not things (Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus, Ludwig Wittgenstein)
In the midst of dark matters, I have acquired a destiny.
This is the world.
The whole entire world.

あのねしんちはなやのさんげ

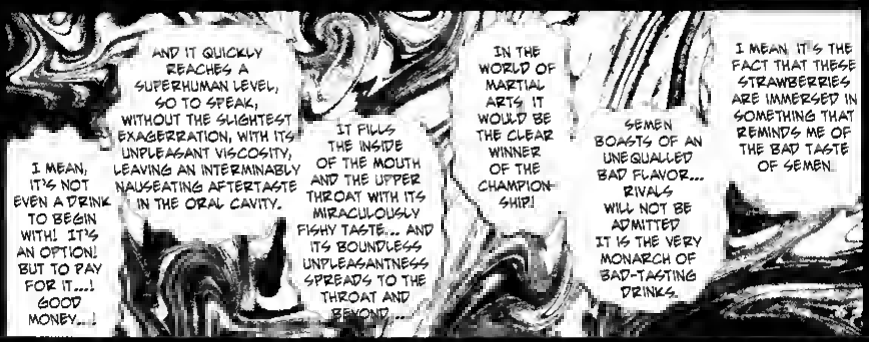
第二話 明晴

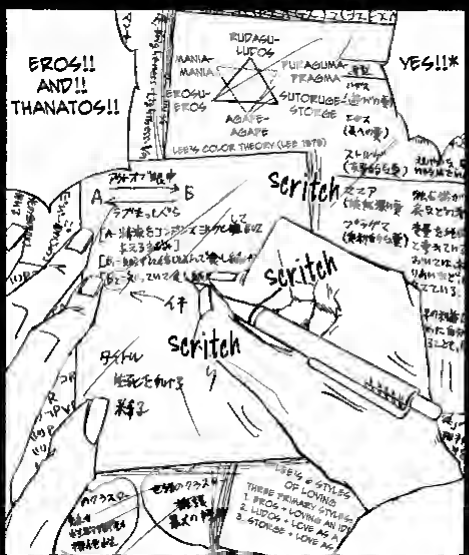
Chapter 2:
Light and
Darkness

Well, he can't get it up if I don't.
Senpai likes it if I have sexual encounters with people other than him.
I'll do anything if I can have sex with him
I go to the shop only so that I can do it with him.
CANDA...
CANDAU-LISM?*
IS THAT WHAT IT'S CALLED?
*CANDAULISM IS A SEXUAL PRACTICE OR FANTASY IN WHICH A MAN EXPOSES HIS FEMALE PARTNER, O.T. IMAGES OF HER TO OTHER PEOPLE FOR THEIR VOYEURISTIC PLEASURE.

I DON'T CARE ABOUT WHETHER SHIT TASTES LIKE CURRY, OR WHETHER CURRY TASTES LIKE SHIT.
I MEAN, I DON'T REALLY CARE WHETHER HE'S MESSING WITH YOUR HEAD.
ISN'T JUUZA JUST TESTING OUT
PLEASE HAVE SOME, FUKA-ZAWA-KUN.
OH, THANKS
I'LL HAVE SOME IN A MINUTE.
NONE OF THAT! NOW! EAT THEM NOW!! NOW!! IMMEDIATELY!! ASAP!!
OKAY
WELL THANKS FOR THE FOOD!

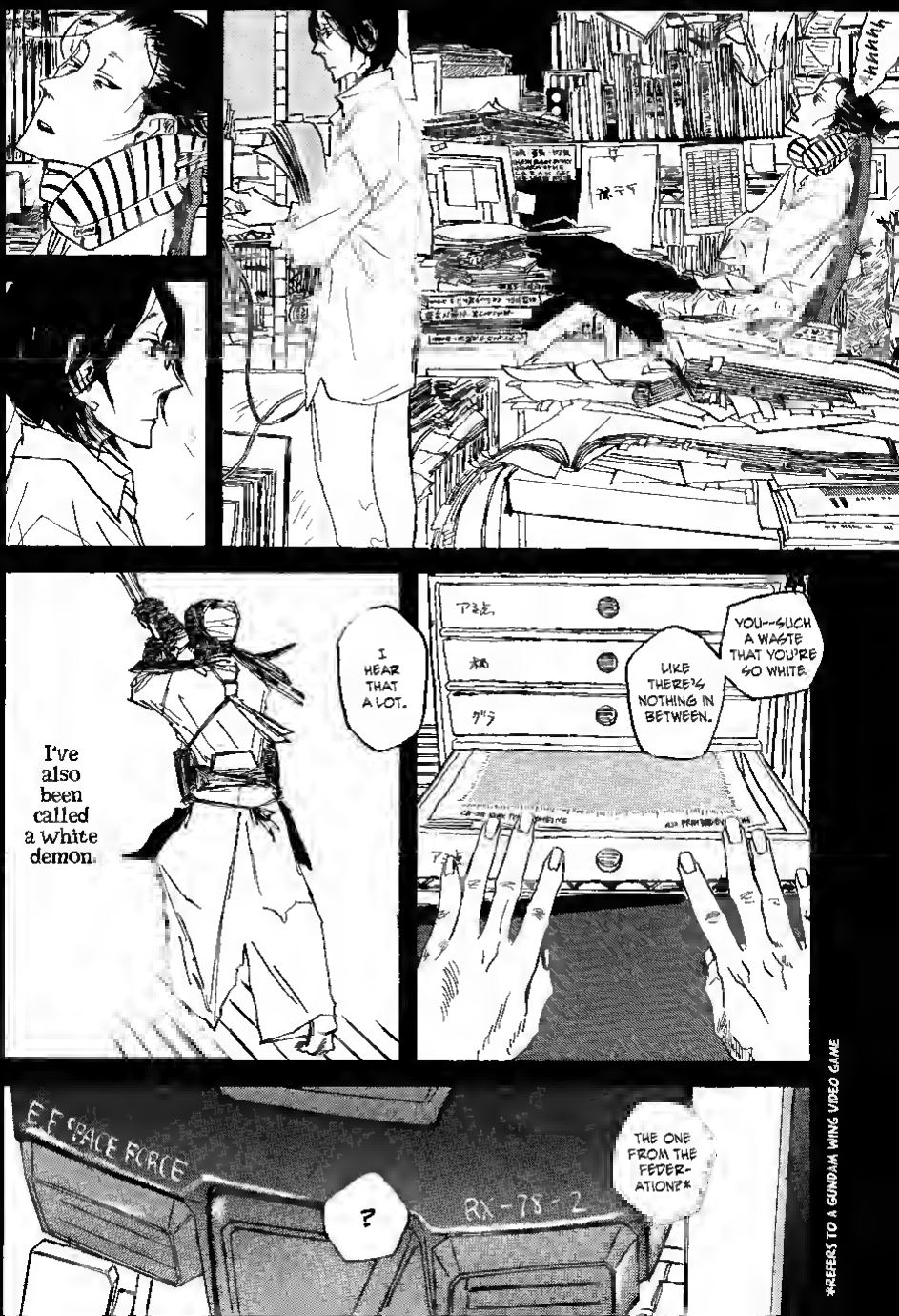
.....
chew
chew
chew
ME!!
I UBERLIKE THEM!! FURTHERMORE I'M IN A SUPER STRAWBERRY MOOD!
CONDENSED MILK IS AN UNSPEAKABLY HATEFUL WORD...!
THE PROBLEM IS THAT WHITE GUY OVER THERE!!
WANTING TO ENJOY MY DRAWING, I HATE MY OWN FOLLY BEYOND ANYTHING POSSIBLE...!
STRAWBERRIES...
DO YOU DISLIKE THEM?


I MEAN, IT'S NOT EVEN A DRINK TO BEGIN WITH! IT'S AN OPTION! BUT TO PAY FOR IT...! GOOD MONEY...!
AND IT QUICKLY REACHES A SUPERHUMAN LEVEL, SO TO SPEAK, WITHOUT THE SLIGHTEST EXAGERRATION, WITH ITS UNPLEASANT VISCOSITY, LEAVING AN INTERMINABLY NAUSEATING AFTERTASTE IN THE ORAL CAVITY.
IT FILLS THE INSIDE OF THE MOUTH AND THE UPPER THROAT WITH ITS MIRACULOUSLY FISHY TASTE... AND ITS BOUNDLESS UNPLEASANTNESS SPREADS TO THE THROAT AND BEYOND...
IN THE WORLD OF MARTIAL ARTS IT WOULD BE THE CLEAR WINNER OF THE CHAMPIONSHIP!
SEMEN BOASTS OF AN UNEQUALLED BAD FLAVOR... RIVALS WILL NOT BE ADMITTED IT IS THE VERY MONARCH OF BAD-TASTING DRINKS.
I MEAN IT'S THE FACT THAT THESE STRAWBERRIES ARE IMMERSED IN SOMETHING THAT REMINDS ME OF THE BAD TASTE OF SEMEN.


EROS!! AND!! THANATOS!!
YES!!*
RUDAGU-LUDOS
MANIA-MANIA
PRAGMA
EROSU-EROS
AGAPE-AGAPE
STORGE
LEE'S COLOR THEORY (LEE 1978)
scritch
scritch
scritch
LEE'S 6 STYLES OF LOVING
THESE PRIMARY STYLES:
1. EROS + LOVING AN IDEA
2. LUDUS + LOVE AS A GAME
3. STORGE + LOVE AS

I GOT IT!!!
CONDENSED MILK TASTES LIKE SEMEN, AND SEMEN TASTES LIKE CONDENSED MILK.

*IN ENGLISH


Ahhhh
I've also been called a white demon.
I HEAR THAT A LOT.
YOU--SUCH A WASTE THAT YOU'RE SO WHITE.
LIKE THERE'S NOTHING IN BETWEEN.
E.F. SPACE FORCE
RX-78-2
?
THE ONE FROM THE FEDER-ATION?*
*REFERS TO A GUNDAM WING VIDEO GAME.

GIRYOU (COMPETENCY)

FIGURE 1

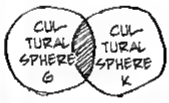
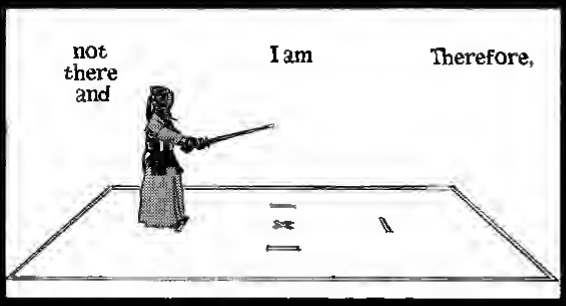
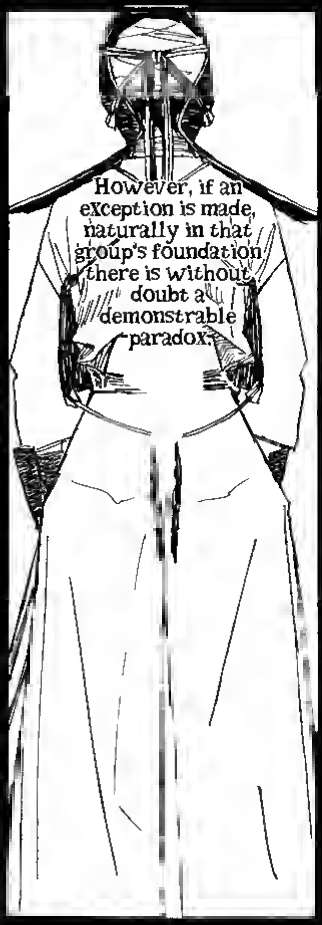


FIGURE 2

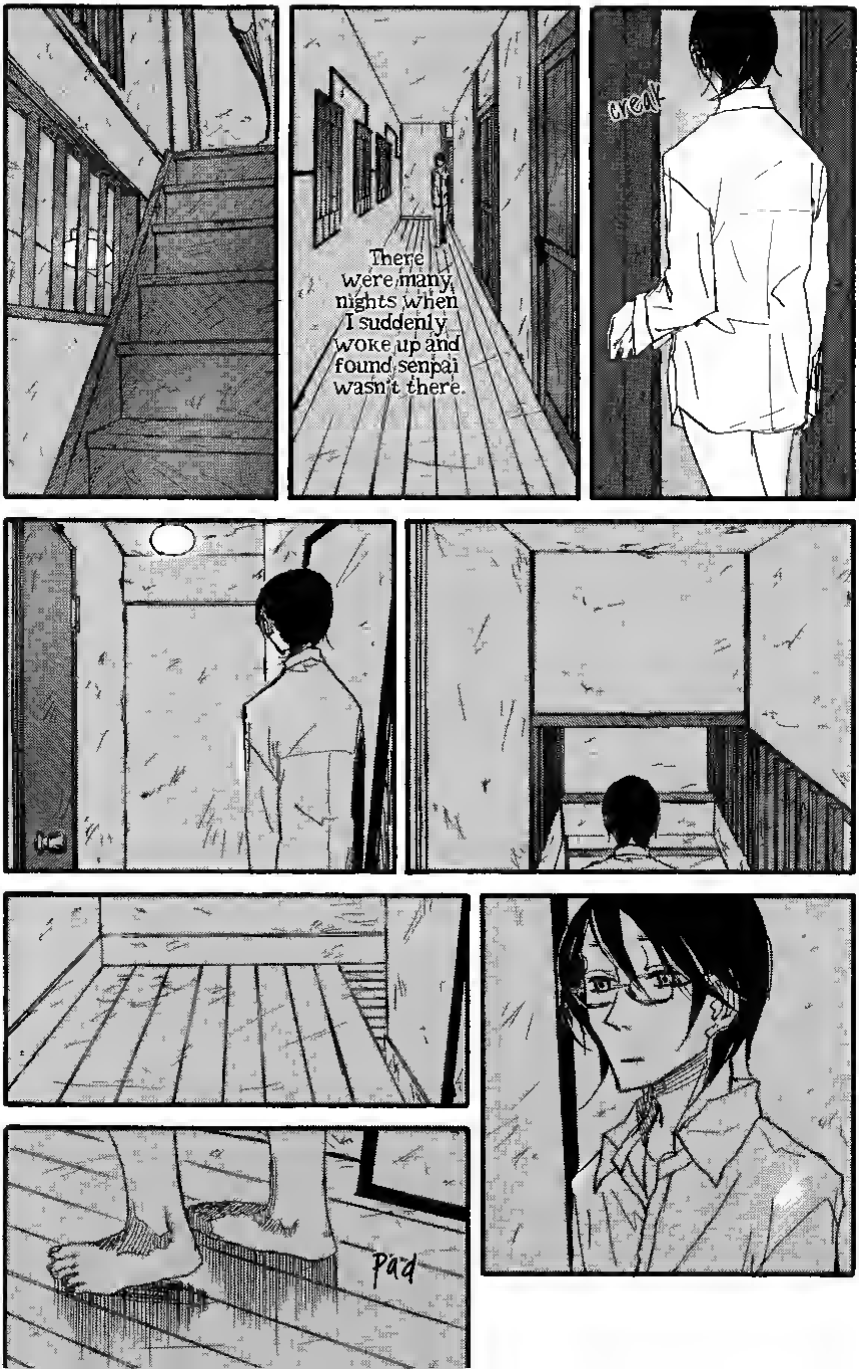
G...GUNDAM
K...KENDO

"White," meaning white skin. When the dougi and hakama are white, it implies that the wearer is undefeated. "Demon" in the religious sense has a very abstract meaning. The uniform is unusual and demonstrates a high degree of skill. The individual and groups who can interpret the key words are exceptions. That compound word, "White Demon," is a word whose use is restricted to groups so that outsiders can be identified, at the same time that resentments and other such emotions are shared; as a consequence, within the group, it is hoped that feelings of solidarity can be reinforced.





I've disappeared.


There were many nights when I suddenly woke up and found senpai wasn't there.
creak
Pad

Pad
Pad
WHAT'S WRONG?
OH, MADOKA-CHAN. GOOD WORK TODAY.
GOOD WORK TODAY.
I'M GOING TO BED.
GOOD-NIGHT, OWNER...

FUKAZAWA-KUN THAT VASE--
KNOCK IT DOWN WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH PLEASE.
.....
I'LL USE ALL MY STRENGTH TO SMASH IT.
YOU'LL MOST LIKELY BE ABLE TO DO IT.
OKAY.
...I'M GOING TO KNOCK IT OVER?
PLEASE DO.
WELL, THEN.
Patter
Patter
Patter
EXCUSE ME.
!!

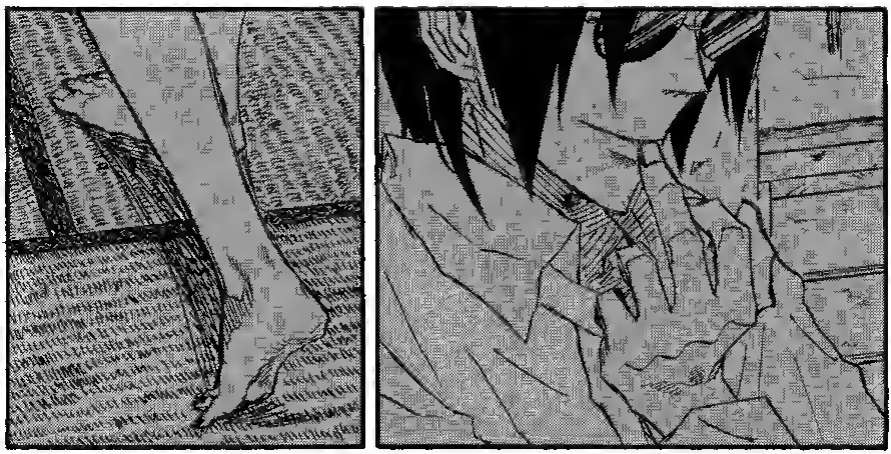
...I SMASHED IT...
YOU THOROUGHLY SMASHED IT.
CRASH
I-I-dah!
IS THAT RIGHT?
WELL, YOU BROKE A VALUABLE VASE. I HEAR YOU'LL BE WORKING FOR US.
That's why I act shame-less.
I'm faint-hearted.
Senpai made me the vase.
YOU DIDN'T GET HURT, DID YOU?
SENPAI.
NO, BUT THE VASE IS RUINED.
Those are my bones.
Senpai and I cleaned up the remains of the vase together.
It was like picking up bones, senpai said.
STORE MANAGER!! PLEASE CLEAN UP AFTER YOURSELF!!
NO, PLEASE DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.
SORRY YOU'VE BEEN TAKING SUCH GOOD CARE OF
Patter
Patter
Patter

But
His style is to muddle along until he gets there.
I know that senpai is almost always here
because
ARE YOU AWAKE?
...SENPAI.
his mind is...
...his mind is...
Senpai is there, but...

..MET MINE
..HIS EYES...
*AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL ONLY

JUUZA'S WIFE.
IT'S HIS MOTHER.
munch
JUST KIDDING...
His mind is...

PA..
SEN...
Don't muddle along.

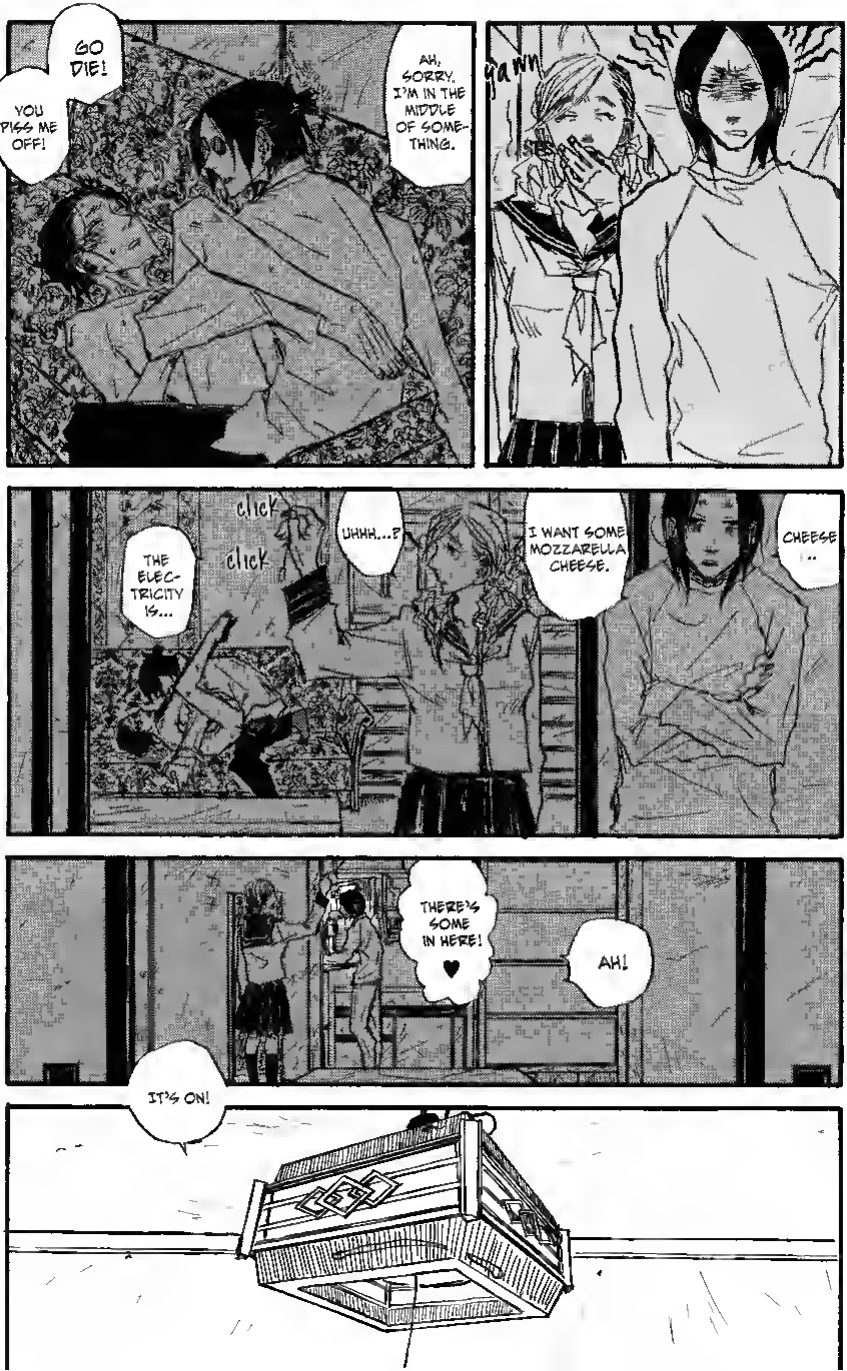


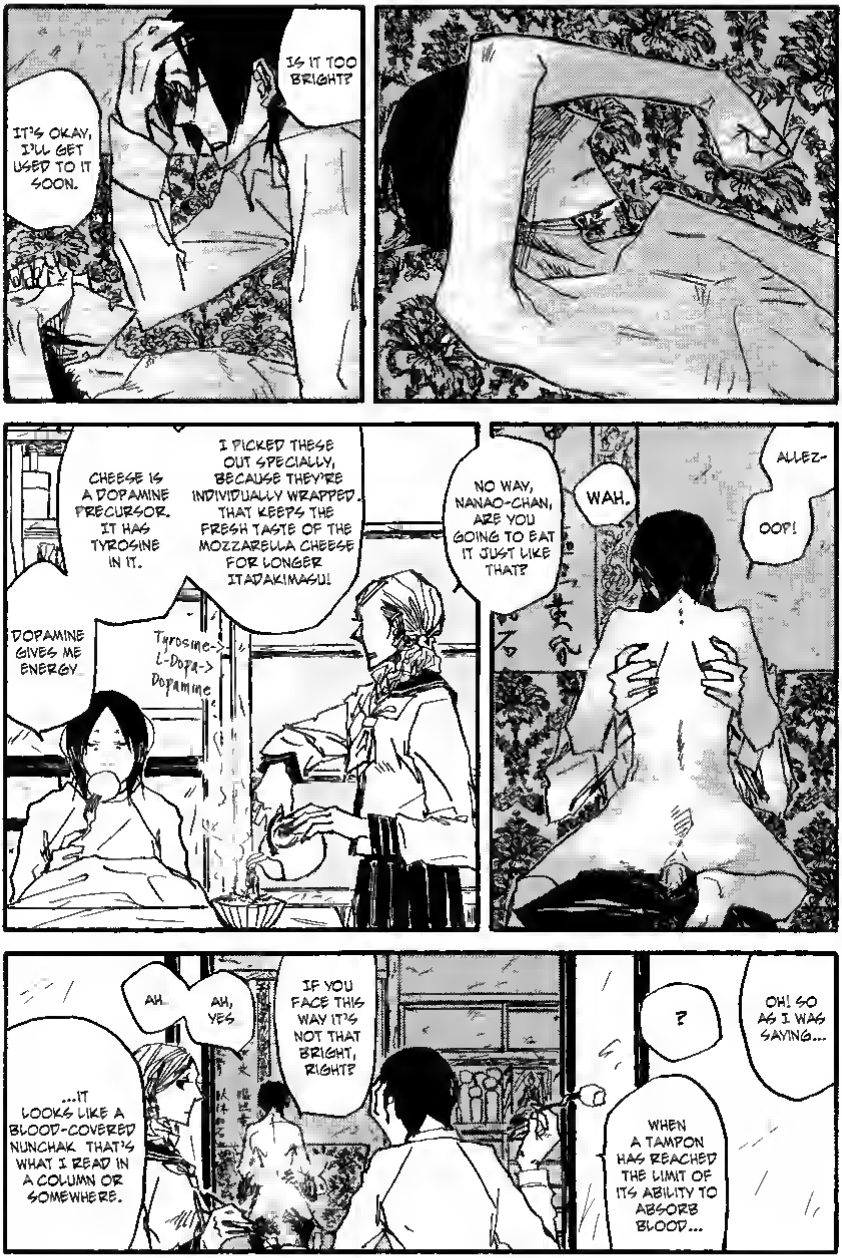
WHAT'S THE MATTER?

IT'S OKAY, BECAUSE YOU'RE SLEEPING BEAUTY
SORRY FOR WAKING YOU.
YOU'RE NEVER THERE WHEN I WAKE UP...
AND I'M THE PRINCE.
YOU'RE A PRINCESS.
PLEASE WAKE UP.
TRUTH IS, YOU'RE ACTUALLY STILL SLEEPING.

AH.
...HOW SURPRISED I WAS TO FIND OUT THAT I HAD TWO TAMPONS IN AGAIN.
GOOD GRIEF, WHY DIDN'T I REMEMBER...
YOU'VE REALLY BEEN FORGETFUL LATELY, NANAO-CHAN.
IT'S NOT BECAUSE I'M GETTING OLD. IT'S THE SIDE-EFFECTS OF THE ANTICHOLINERGIC.

THE EXTRAPYRIMIDAL SYMPTOMS ARE AT A MAXIMUM.
IT'S GOTTEN TO THE POINT THAT MY HANDS SHAKE SO BADLY, I CAN'T DO MY WORK.
BUT ANYWAY---
A TAMPON THAT'S COMPLETELY SATURATED IS LIKE---


GO DIE!
YOU PISS ME OFF!
AH, SORRY. I'M IN THE MIDDLE OF SOME-THING.
yawn
click
click
THE ELEC-TRICITY IS...
UHHH...?
I WANT SOME MOZZARELLA CHEESE.
CHEESE...
THERE'S SOME IN HERE!
AH!
IT'S ON!


IS IT TOO BRIGHT?
IT'S OKAY, I'LL GET USED TO IT SOON.
I PICKED THESE OUT SPECIALLY, BECAUSE THEY'RE INDIVIDUALLY WRAPPED. THAT KEEPS THE FRESH TASTE OF THE MOZZARELLA CHEESE FOR LONGER ITADAKIMASU!
CHEESE IS A DOPAMINE PRECURSOR. IT HAS TYROSINE IN IT.
DOPAMINE GIVES ME ENERGY
Tyrosine--> L-Dopa--> Dopamine
NO WAY, NANAO-CHAN, ARE YOU GOING TO EAT IT JUST LIKE THAT?
WAH.
ALLEZ-
OOP!
AH...
AH, YES
IF YOU FACE THIS WAY IT'S NOT THAT BRIGHT, RIGHT?
...IT LOOKS LIKE A BLOOD-COVERED NUNCHAK. THAT'S WHAT I READ IN A COLUMN OR SOMEWHERE.
?
OH! SO AS I WAS SAYING...
WHEN A TAMPON HAS REACHED THE LIMIT OF ITS ABILITY TO ABSORB BLOOD...

*T/N TYROSINE IS AN AMINO ACID, AND ACCORDING TO WIKIPEDIA IT IS USED BY THE BODY TO SYNTHESIZE DOPAMINE, THE NEUROTRANSMITTER.

*EMPEROR SURETSU 25TH EMPEROR OF JAPAN (489–507)
EMPEROR REIZEI 63RD EMPEROR OF JAPAN (967–969)

ARE YOU CONCERNED ABOUT THEM?
IT'S OKAY, BECAUSE THEY AREN'T WATCHING.
THE LOSS OF THE SEX DRIVE-> THE LOSS OF INTEREST OR DESIRE GENERALLY IN SEXUAL MATTERS
SEXUAL MATTERS AND RELATED ISSUES ARE NOT WELL-UNDERSTOOD.
I CAN'T DRAW MANGA.
NO WORK NO MONEY.
HAVE TO LEAVE THE SHOP.
LACK OF PHYSICAL STRENGTH MEANS COMPLETE EXHAUSTION
SEXUAL ACTS AS WELL AS RELATIONSHIP MATTERS BECOME LOATHESOME.
OH, BUT IS IT POSSIBLE THAT BEING WATCHED PROVED TO BE AROUSING, FUKAZAWA-KUN?
INCREASINGLY, I AM UNABLE TO DRAW MANGA.
I'M NOT FEELING IT.
ARE YOU?
BUT YOU'RE STILL PRETTY TIGHT HERE.
I WONDER WHY?
THUS, THE DEFLATIONARY SPIRAL IS COMPLETE.
NO, I'D RATHER NOT! DEFINITELY NOT!

AH!
NO MONEY, NO LIFE!
AH!
AH!
I MAY TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO TRY TUNA FISHING..
AH~ BUT IF THERE'S NO LIFE, THERE'S NO MONEY...
THAT.
glub
glub
PRECISION
TAPE WHAT AND SELL IT?
RATHER THAN THAT, WHY DON'T YOU TAPE THAT AND SELL IT?
NANAO-CHAN, YOU HAVE NO PHYSICAL STRENGTH SO IT'S IMPOSSIBLE FOR YOU

WHAT--?
YES, THAT.
OUCH! IT WILL NEVER SELL--
ROKKA-CHAN, YOUR TASTE IS TOO BAD...
I WONDER ABOUT THAT.
EXACTLY--
I'M NOT SURE THERE ARE ENOUGH NAIVE PEOPLE IN THE WORLD TO MAKE THAT IDEA GO.
OR PERHAPS IT WOULD BE BETTER TO CALL IT TORTURE STARING FOR LONG HOURS AT THAT--
NO MATTER HOW MAD THEY ARE, THEY WON'T BUY IT.
NO-- BETTER YET, YOU COULD BUILD A MARKET SELLING IT TO THE POLICE; THEY CAN USE IT AS A TORTURE DEVICE.
WON'T YOU BE ARRES-TED?
My eyes were open, yet I could hardly see.

Even when I close my eyes, it doesn't disappear.
However...
THAT'S NOT GOOD.
EITHER WAY I CAN'T WIN.
I WANT TO DO SOMETHING REALLY ORIGINAL—
What I'm seeing are the white bones.
IN ANY EVENT, IT'S NOT INTERESTING ENOUGH, OR RATHER...
LIKE DOING CALLIGRAPHY WITH MY ASSHOLE.
Causing me to disappear.
Giving off a brilliant, white light...
ANAL IMPACT. ASS IS NOT LOVE (A QUOTE FROM THE EXCEL SAGA GOHATTO).
AH! NOTHING WORKS!
...ZAWA-KUN.
© NINGEN NO KUZU (HUMAN GARBAGE)** © THE EXCEL SAGA OP** ©GOHATTO
Causing me to disappear.
FUKAZAWA-KUN?
ORIG-INALITY BRINGS US THAT MUCH CLOSER TO DEATH, LAST BOY.

*A 2001 FILM **EXCEL SAGA IS AN ANIME ORIGINALLY AIRED FROM 1999 TO 2000 IN JAPAN

**A 1999 JAPANESE FILM ABOUT A SAMURAI TRAINING SCHOOL IN THE BAKAMATSU PERIOD INCLUDING THE ISSUE OF HOMOSEXUAL RELATIONS AMONG SAMURAI

SENPAI.
WHAT'S WRONG?
?
SENPAI.
WAKE ME UP SOME MORE, PLEASE.

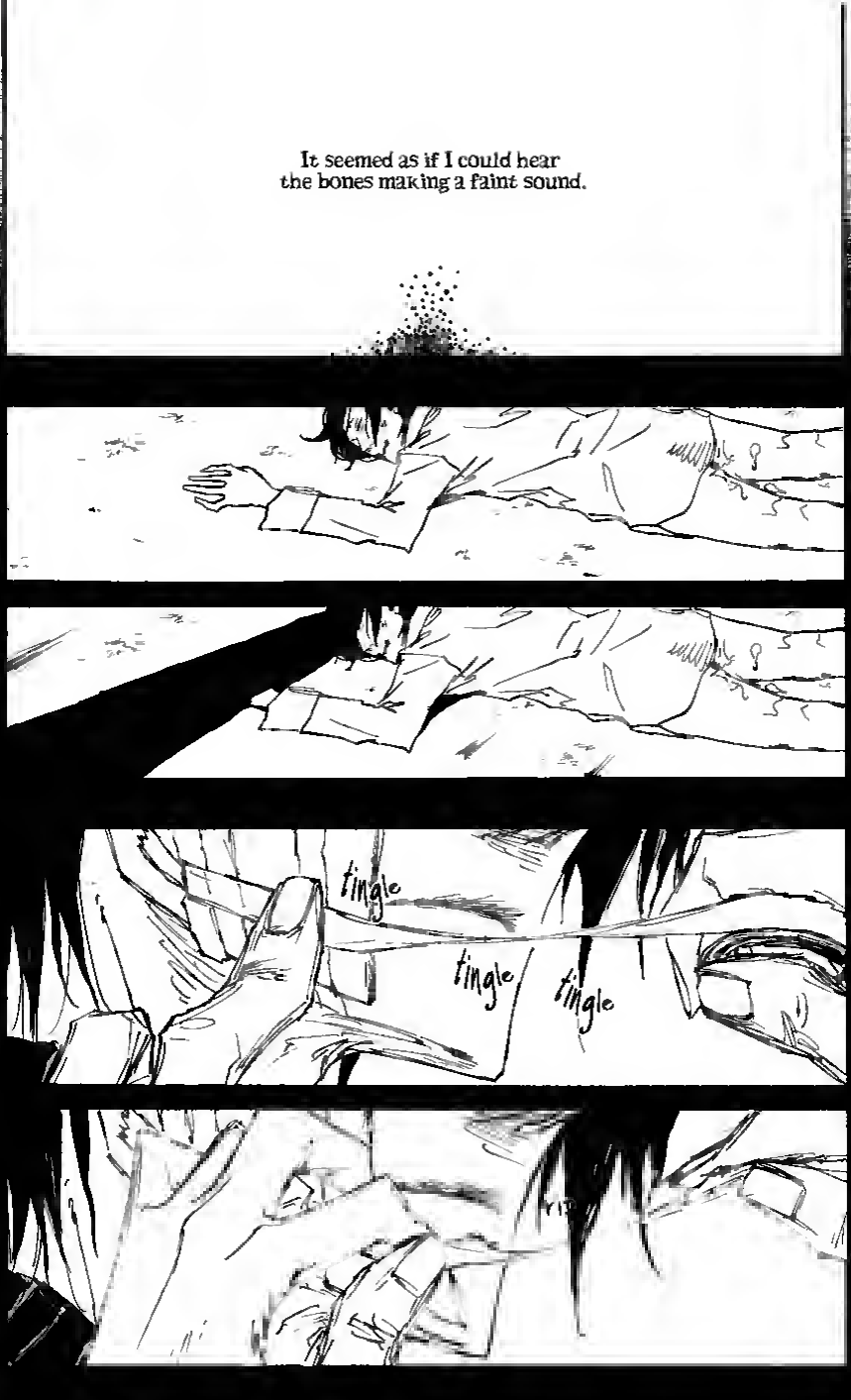
OUT!
SAFE!
TO BEGIN WITH, I THINK THAT THE VECTORS OF LOVE AND PASSION ARE OPPOSITE
YOU'RE RIGHT.
I THINK THE MEANING OF THE "L" IN "BL" IS MORE LIKE PASSION.
YOU'RE RIGHT. NANAO-CHAN, HAVE YOU HAD A BATH?
I TOOK ONE ABOUT TWO WEEKS AGO, SO I'M FINE.
BUT THE MEANING OF "LOVE" IN PURE LOVE IS JUST LOVE.
YOU'RE RIGHT.
I'M CLOSING UP, JUUZA..
OH, OKAY.
B AND L ARE OVER THERE STUFFING THE SCREW INTO LOVE TO THE POINT OF EXHAUSTION.
OUT!
COME ON, YOU.
NOOO-OOO!
AH!
YAH!
rattle
DIDN'T I SAY THAT THE TUNA BOAT WAS OUT OF THE QUESTION?
rattle
rattle

YOUR NECK IS SENSITIVE.
AH!
AH!
TH-
THAT'S NOT IT.
NO MORE AFTER THIS.
THAT'S WHY.
I HAVE P E TOMORROW.
TSK!
N--
NO?
AAH!
THEN, WHAT ABOUT HERE?
AH.
MM...
AH!
BUT YOU'RE GETTING HARD THERE, AREN'T YOU?
SENPAI.
NO...
PL- PLEASE DON'T RUB IT...

LET'S TAKE A BATH AND THEN GO TO SLEEP.
WELL ...
A LOT CAME OUT, DIDN'T IT?
HAA.
HA.
HAA.
HAA.
I WON'T UNDER-STAND UNLESS YOU SPEAK UP.
WHAT'S THE MATTER?
OOPS!

LET ME WATCH YOU PUT IT IN YOURSELF.
YOU MEAN THIS?
...I WANT YOURS ...
HA--
AH!
MM
HA!
!

AH!
AHH!
AH!


It seemed as if I could hear
the bones making a faint sound.
?
?
tingle
tingle
tingle

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
WELL, THAT'LL DO FOR NOW.

I APPRECIATE YOUR CONCERN.
I DISINFECTED THE WOUND FOR NOW, BUT YOU'D BETTER GO TO THE HOSPITAL.
I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THE SKULL OR THE BRAIN.

I was burning up, and at the same time, my chest hurt.
The pain was not in my wound. It was in another place.

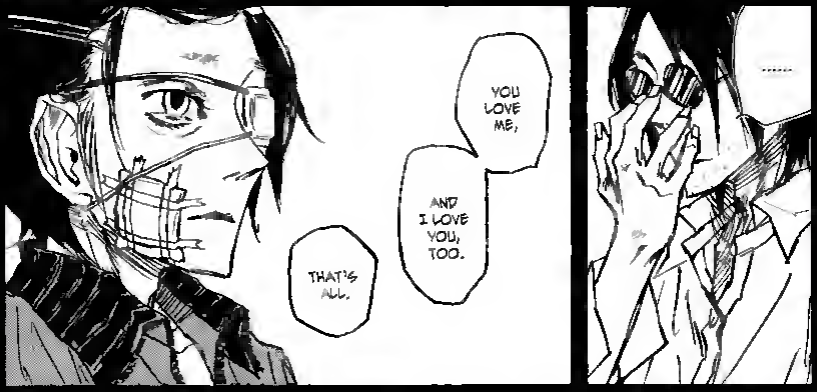
EVEN THOUGH YOU BROUGHT ALONG YOUR CLUB REGISTRATION FORM
LOOKS LIKE THERE'S NO HELPING IT.
Both of those thoughts occurred simultaneously. My mind was violently confused.
I wanted to stay here with him forever.
At that moment, I wanted to get away from this place and also him as soon as possible.
It was like my whole body was burning hot; all the while my chest was hurting.
Even when separating myself from the heat source...
NO...
Even his shadow was hot.
THERE'S HARDLY ANY PEDESTRIAN TRAFFIC HERE.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT PLEASE
THIS KIND OF THING IS ALWAYS
HEAVE-HO!

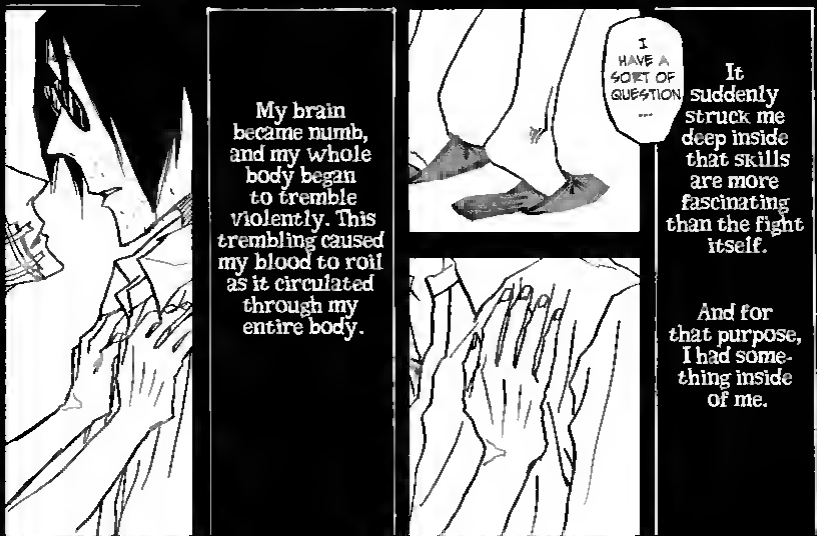
IF I WERE YOU, I'D WANT TO BECOME STRONGER AT KENDO OR SOMETHING.
IF YOU'RE SMART, YOU'LL TAKE MY ADVICE.
DON'T MAKE SUCH A BIG DEAL OUT OF IT.
?
I SAW YOU AT THE LAST TOURNAMENT.
HAHA-HA.
I'M NOT STRONG AT ALL.
I ONLY DID KENDO BECAUSE MY GRANDFATHER SAID MY POSTURE WAS BAD.
I JUST KEPT DOING IT, THOUGH.
IN THE END, MY POSTURE IS STILL BAD.
BUT WHY THE WAKIGAMAE?
I'M LEFT-HANDED, THAT'S THE ONLY REASON.
HAHA.
toss
I WONDER IF THEY WOULD REBUILD THE CLUBROOM IF WE WENT TO THE NATIONALS.
STUDENTS FROM OTHER SCHOOLS ALWAYS MISTAKE THIS PLACE AS A TOILET.

I SAW YOU AT THE HOSPITAL.
.....
OH. WAS THAT YOU FUKAZAWA-KUN?
I THOUGHT YOU WERE A GHOST OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT.
YOU WERE SO PALE.
AND YOU LOOKED BLUE THOUGH IT WAS JUST THE SIDE EFFECTS OF TAKING SOME MEDICINE
ARE THESE THE RIGHT SIZE PANTS?

?
AH BUT YOUR GLASSES
GOT BROKEN

NO, YOU'RE NOT.
YOU'RE NOT. BUT I DON'T UNDERSTAND THE LOGIC.
AM I WRONG?
.....


YOU LOVE ME,
AND I LOVE YOU, TOO.
THAT'S ALL.
.....


My brain became numb, and my whole body began to tremble violently. This trembling caused my blood to roil as it circulated through my entire body.
I HAVE A SORT OF QUESTION ...
It suddenly struck me deep inside that skills are more fascinating than the fight itself.
And for that purpose, I had something inside of me.

This person's spirit completes me.

The blood circulated throughout my whole body and accumulated at the pit of my stomach. It did not go away, and there was a sharp pain. As for that, I was certain that I was connected to the world by living pain.

It's destiny.

Senpai gave my life meaning outside of kendo.

Senpai is everything. He is my entire life.

My brain thawed, and the pain from my wound disappeared.

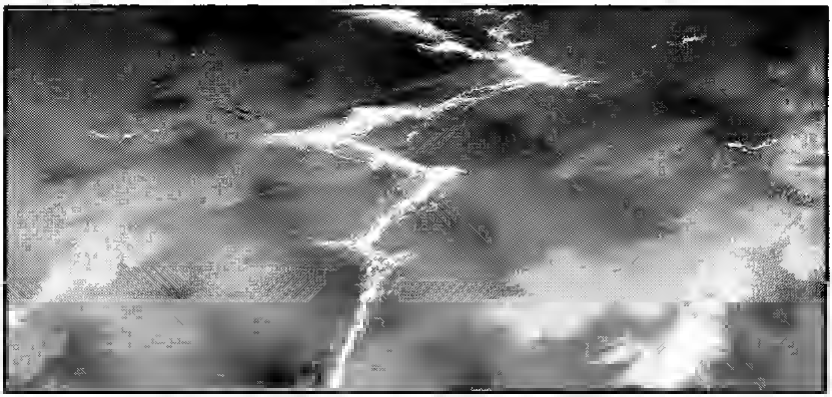
On the north side of the district, there is a graveyard. You can cut through it to get to Senpai's home.

WE BURIED THEM THE OTHER DAY.
THE REMAINS
munch

I may not have come through here often for this kind of thing.
OH, RIGHT...
WHERE SHALL WE HAVE OUR NEXT PRACTICE MATCH?
However,
I've gone through there so many times it doesn't bother me anymore.
WELL, WE SHOULD INFORM NODA HIGH.
I lied.
I'D LIKE TO GO UP AGAINST THE GUY NAMED SAKAI AT NODA HIGH.
WHERE DO YOU WANT TO DO IT?
I don't understand any of it.
What I'd really prefer is...
Just one thing.
...only one thing.

If...
My hunger for love was leading me into a dark and gloomy pit.

It's a miserably cruel thing.
It's passion.
It's not love.

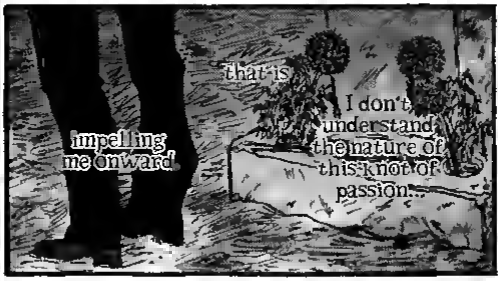


THAT WAS BRIGHT.
AH.

I felt as if senpai had gone far away.
LET'S HURRY UP AND GO HOME
If he only came to love me...
THE WIND HAS COME UP, TOO.

If I crave him too much, does that make me greedy
If there's a shortage, will it make me crave more?
I might be rapidly getting greedy.

WHAT'S THE MATTER?
in this black darkness...


impelling me onward
that is
I don't understand the nature of this knot of passion...

I don't understand any of it.

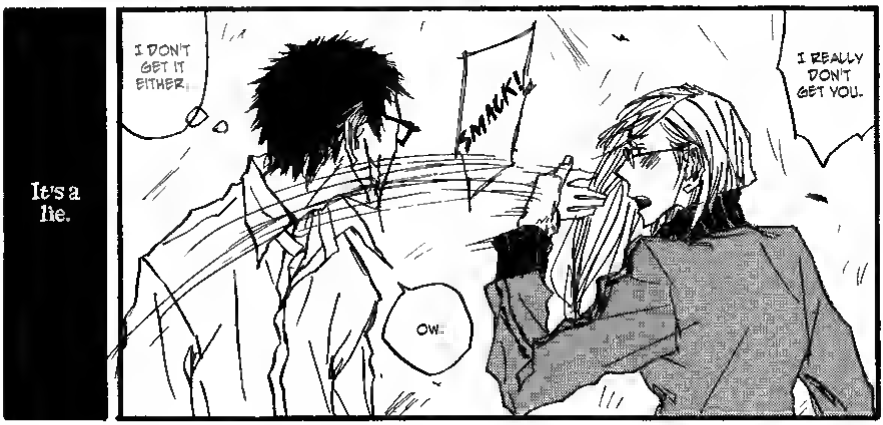
SENPAI
BLAZING LIGHT
In this white darkness...

in this dark, empty vision of mine.

My M.O. is to lose interest in a thing as soon as I've obtained it.
SORRY.
Sawdust Record
I SAID SORRY!
THAT WAS BAD OF ME.
I'M VERY SORRY.
I'M REALLY SORRY
.....
.....

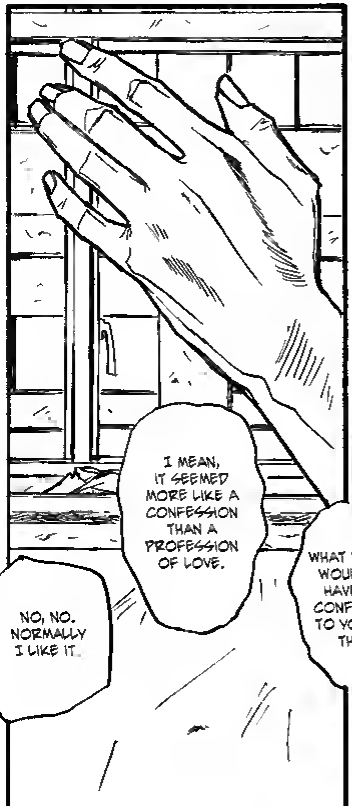
WHAT NEXT?
DIS-GUST-ING.
IDIOT!!
YOU MAKE ME SICK.
YOU'RE TRULY THE WORST!!

THEN WE'RE OKAY NOW!
WHAT!? YOU'RE KIDDING!
YEAH. THANKS.
AH,
PLEASE GO OUT WITH ME.
EVERY NIGHT I MASTUR-BATE WHILE THINKING ABOUT YOU.


It's a lie.
I DON'T GET IT EITHER.
SMACK!
OW.
I REALLY DON'T GET YOU.

AH. YEAH, THANKS
AND I THINK IT'S BEST FOR YOU TO NOT TELL THE OTHER KIDS!
EVEN IF IT'S NORMAL, AS YOU SAY, I'LL REJECT YOU IMMEDIATELY!
DON'T THINK OF ME WHILE MASTURBATING EVER AGAIN!!
I know.
YOU DON'T KNOW THAT!!
WHEN YOU'RE LIKE THAT I LOVE YOU--
More than her, though, I want things that I can never get.
She's okay with me, even though she's a kill-joy.

AH.
TODAY'S VOLUNTARY STUDY, YET YOU'RE LEAVING?
HANIYA,
I WANT TO BELIEVE THAT THE WORLD IS BEAUTIFUL ...
OR IS IT ONLY COWARDICE?
FUKUZAWA,
AND IWAMI.
WHOA ...


I MEAN, IT SEEMED MORE LIKE A CONFESSION THAN A PROFESSION OF LOVE.
NO, NO. NORMALLY I LIKE IT.

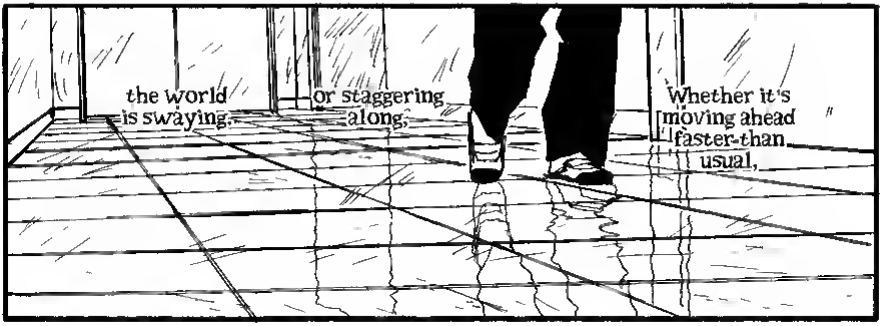
WHAT'S THAT ON YOUR FACE?
AHAHA. THIS?

THIS IS HOW THE HOMEROOM COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN PROFESSED HER LOVE FOR ME.
HUH~~?
WHAT REASON WOULD SHE HAVE FOR CONFESSING TO YOU LIKE THAT?

AT ANY RATE, YOU SAID SOMETHING UNNECESSARY, RIGHT?
Your whole body's showing it.
YOUR KIND OF NORMAL IS DISGUSTING.
Tap
DOES IT HURT?
YEAH. WELL, THAT'S PRETTY MUCH WHAT HAPPENED.
Stroke Stroke
H-HEY, FUKUZAWA..!
I LIKE YOU, FUKAZAWA.
WHA...!
EVERY NIGHT I MASTURBATE WHILE THINKING OF YOU.
HANIYA, WHAT'RE YOU...

The Fukazawa of that time had probably become irreparably damaged by the club president. Because he did not comprehend human speech, he displayed bizarre behavior in various settings.

FOR MY SAKE, DON'T FIGHT!!
STOP IT, YOU TWO!!
REGRESSION TO INFANCY ...?
AH~~
NOW!
OUTSIDE WITH YOU TWO! OUTSIDE!
IT'S LOVE.
IT'S NOT LOVE! IT'S HANIYA'S SALIVA!
AH SORRY.
BEFORE THAT, I'M GOING TO THE BATHROOM.
EH!? NO WAAAY.



From the moment he touched me, the blood drained from my face. Why did I feel as if my life energy was sucked out of me, leaving me parched and in total darkness?

Chapter 3:
The Sawdust
Record

"PRETTY SOON I IMAGINED THEM ALL OVER THE HOUSE. I WONDERED IF I SHOULD WAKE VERN AND TELL HIM I WAS HAVING A BAD DREAM. INSTEAD, I GOT UP AND WENT FOR THE CAN OF SPRAY."
Perhaps Fukazawa doesn't remember...
"I LOOKED UNDER THE SINK AGAIN. BUT THERE WAS NO ANTS LEFT. I TURNED ON EVERY LIGHT IN THE HOUSE UNTIL I HAD THE HOUSE BLAZING."
I Want to be Loved
* FROM "THE IDEA" BY RAYMOND CARVER. COLLECTED IN WILL YOU PLEASE BE QUIET PLEASE?
"I KEPT SPRAYING."
"FINALLY, I RAISED THE SHADE IN THE KITCHEN AND LOOKED OUT. IT WAS LATE."
... that time when he wore something inappropriate...
MEOW--
But I remember.
(one day he suddenly became a cat).
"THE WIND BLEW AND I HEARD BRANCHES SNAP."
I kissed him (or should I say... was kissed by him).
One time only...

Even though Fukazawa was good at studying, he was an idiot.

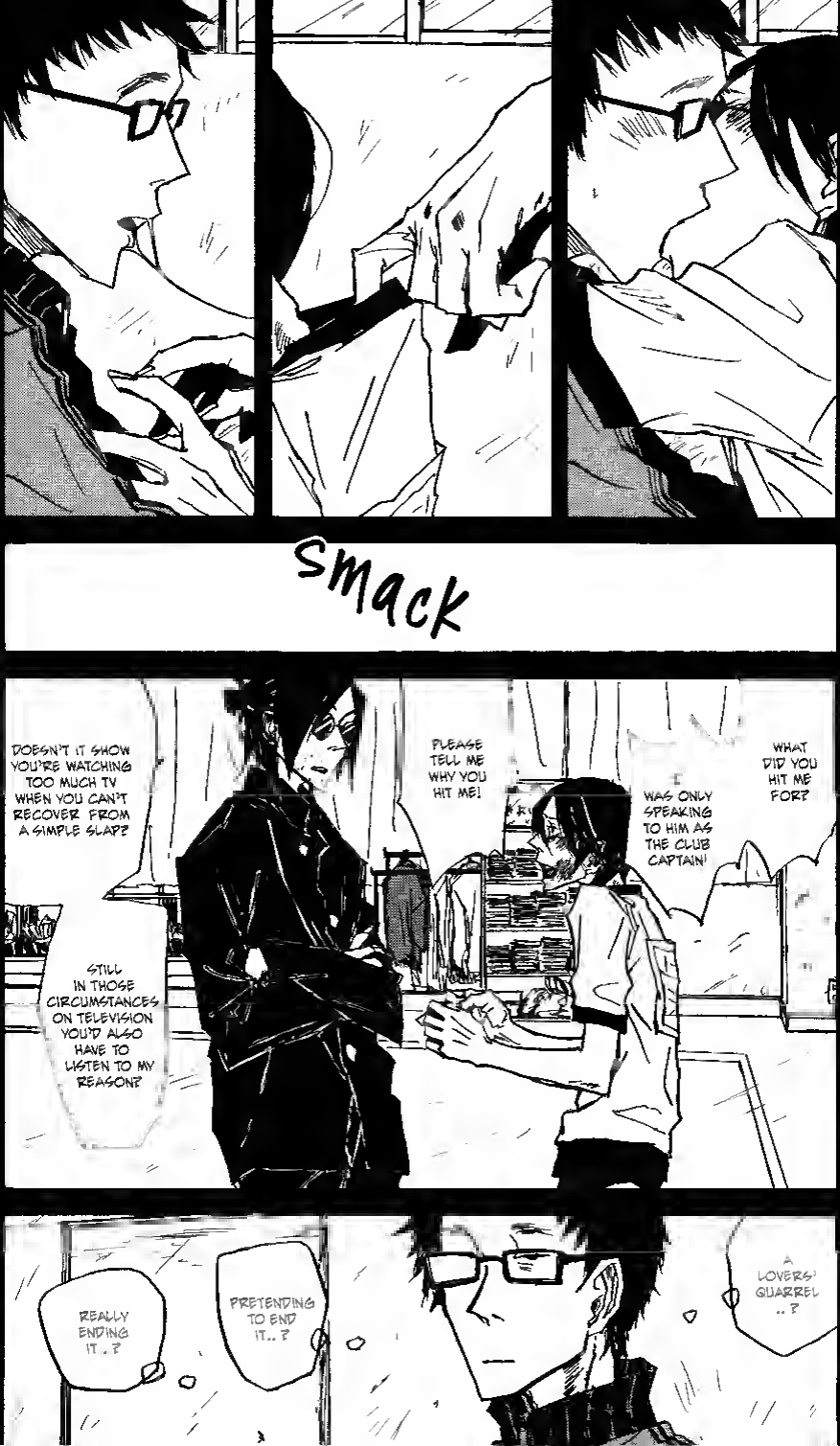
He became friends with the club captain so that he could aggressively and vigorously play with his gear stick to the point of idiocy.

This, combined with his unfortunate lack of interpersonal skills, had a negative effect. No one in the club would clean the dojo with Fukazawa-- because they hated him-- so this duty was silently handed down to me.

Fukuzawa and I were childhood friends.

ALREADY OFFERED YOU MY JERSEY BUT—
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
ACHOO!
CHOO!
I MEAN AREN'T YOU COLD IN THAT OUTFIT?
WHY DIDN'T HE LISTEN WHEN I TOLD HIM TO WEAR HIS GYM SHORTS?
...HA—
IT'S NOT LIKE HE COULDN'T HAVE PREDICTED
I OFFERED YOU MY JER—
WELL, YEAH, THAT'S WHY
MY SKIN.
YOU'RE NOT A CHICKEN, FUKAZAWA.
?
CHICKEN.
FUKAZA—
GRAB
WHAT?
WHAT?
GRAB
—GEY...
WHOA!

...WA.
1-1-39
深沢
fall
I'VE WAITED A LONG TIME FOR THIS.

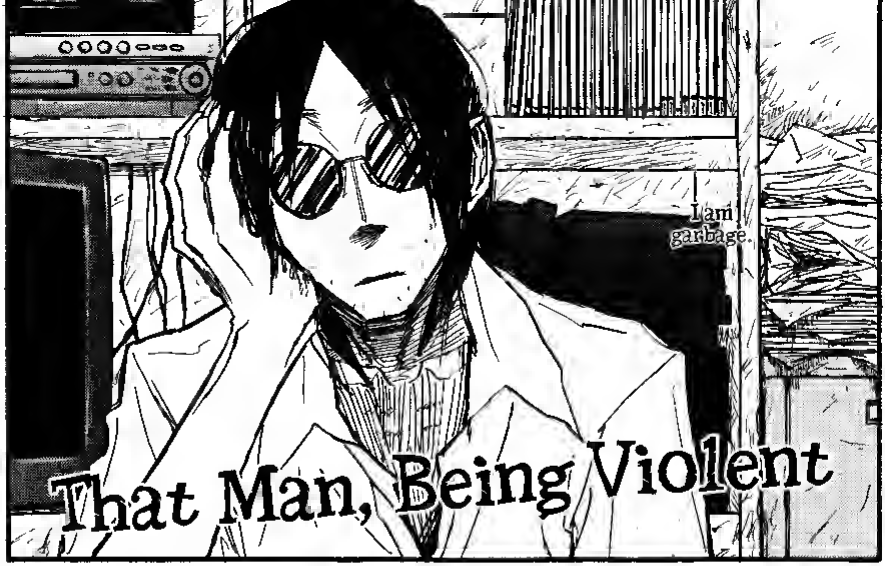

Smack
DOESN'T IT SHOW YOU'RE WATCHING TOO MUCH TV WHEN YOU CAN'T RECOVER FROM A SIMPLE SLAP?
STILL IN THOSE CIRCUMSTANCES ON TELEVISION YOU'D ALSO HAVE TO LISTEN TO MY REASON?
PLEASE TELL ME WHY YOU HIT ME!
I WAS ONLY SPEAKING TO HIM AS THE CLUB CAPTAIN!
WHAT DID YOU HIT ME FOR?
REALLY ENDING IT..?
PRETENDING TO END IT..?
A LOVERS' QUARREL ..?

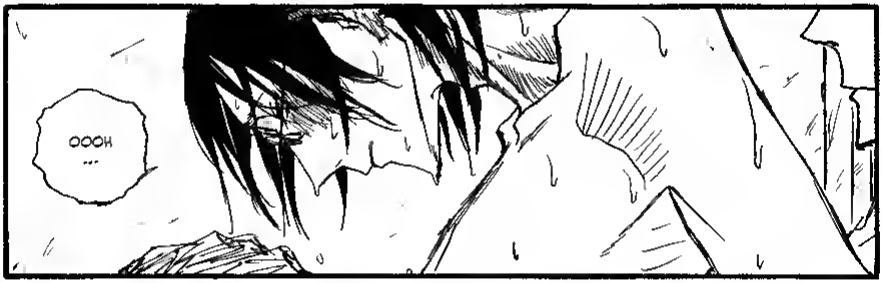
CAN'T YOU SHAVE PROPERLY EITHER?!
THAT'S ENOUGH.
PLEASE BE QUIET FUKAZAWA-KUN
AND DO YOU THINK I LIKE THAT PUBIC HAIR GROWING ON YOUR FACE?
PLEASE DON'T ANSWER A QUESTION WITH A QUESTION! IT INTERFERES WITH COMMUNICATION!
PLEASE ANSWER ME PROPERLY!
I'M SORRY!
I WON'T NAG!!
SO STAY WITH ME, PLEASE!
I WISH THEY'D STOP.
I DISLIKE BEING NAGGED
PLEASE HURRY AND LEAVE THE CAMPUS SO YOU CAN GO COOL OFF.
YOU DON'T LISTEN WHEN PEOPLE ARE TALKING.

I REALLY WISH THEY'D STOP...
YES! I'M GOING!!
FUKA-ZAWA-KUN
I WOULD ALSO PREFER IT IF YOU'D STOP DROPPING BY MY HOME.

I WONDER WHAT HIS FACE LOOKS LIKE NOW
I WON'T!!
REALLY, WHAT, WHAT KIND OF...
WHAT IS THIS ..?
I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT IT MEANS.
I had the feeling I'd seen something I shouldn't have. Somehow, it aroused me sexually.
AND IT'S GETTING COLDER.
rattle
IT'S RAINING HARD NOW...
KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK.
THANKS FOR CLEANING UP.
«"THAT TRASH," I SAID.»
«"THE IDEAL"»

Surely that expression was something he'd prefer to keep to himself.
"I USED EVEN WORSE LANGUAGE, THINGS I CAN'T REPEAT."
...TO HIMSELF.
"YES, WELL—"
"PRETTY SOON I IMAGINED THEM ALL OVER THE HOUSE."
"INSTEAD, I GOT UP AND WENT FOR THE CAN OF SPRAY."
"I WONDERED IF I SHOULD WAKE VERN AND TELL HIM I WAS HAVING A BAD DREAM."
"I LOOKED UNDER THE SINK AGAIN, BUT THERE WERE NO ANTS LEFT."
My heart hurts so bad.
"I TURNED ON EVERY LIGHT IN THE HOUSE UNTIL I HAD THE HOUSE BLAZING. I KEPT SPRAYING FINALLY I RAISED THE SHADE IN THE KITCHEN AND LOOKED OUT."
"IT WAS LATE THE WIND BLEW AND I HEARD BRANCHES SNAP."
"THAT TRASH,' I SAID TO MYSELF."
Am I acting this way because I'm jealous?
"WHAT AM I THINK-ING?!"


I am garbage.
That Man, Being Violent


OOOH ...

I don't think I can redeem myself. I'm too indulgent. Garbage left in a corner, although it hasn't been thrown out, is still garbage.
YAH!
AAH!
AH!
Garbage in the sense of who I've become; I wasn't born as garbage.

"Rather than saying that I'm a bad person or that I'm a good person, it's more that I'm dishonest. That's what I think." (From *I Want to Hold Tightly Onto the Sea*, by Sakaguchi Ango)

...That's what I think.
WHAH!
.....
FUKAZAWA-KUN.
?

MORE THAN ME?
I REALLY LIKE CATS.
HAA.
HAA.
HAA.
HAA.
LATELY, WHEN I CAN'T SLEEP AT NIGHT, I'VE BEEN DOING A LOT OF THINKING.
rummage
EVEN IF I DID JUST SUDDENLY BRING CATS UP.
THAT'S A FOOLISH QUESTION, FUKAZAWA-KUN.
rummage
A FUSION OF MYSELF AND A CAT, HUH?
LET'S PUT THEM ON.
IF MY BELOVED CAT AND MY BELOVED FUKAZAWA-KUN BECAME ONE, WHAT HAPPINESS THAT WOULD BE!
IN THAT VALLEY, THOUGHTS BLOOM LIKE LILIES. UNITING FUKAZAWA-KUN'S CUTENESS TO A CAT'S NOBLE AND MYSTERIOUS CHARM IN A SINGLE CREATURE.
YES, YES, THAT'S IT.
MUSSH
THAT WOULD MAKE MOST PEOPLE UNHAPPY, I THINK...

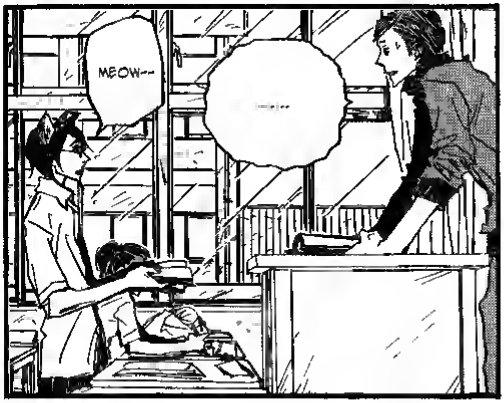
RIGHT NOW, FUKAZAWA-KUN, WHAT SOUND DOES A CAT MAKE?
IT SAYS
"MEOW"

ALL RIGHT
AND FROM NOW ON, YOU'LL BE A CAT.
AS A REWARD, I'M GOING TO GIVE YOU A TAIL.
THAT'S RIGHT. GOOD JOB
THAT'S NOT RIGHT, IS IT?

MEOW.

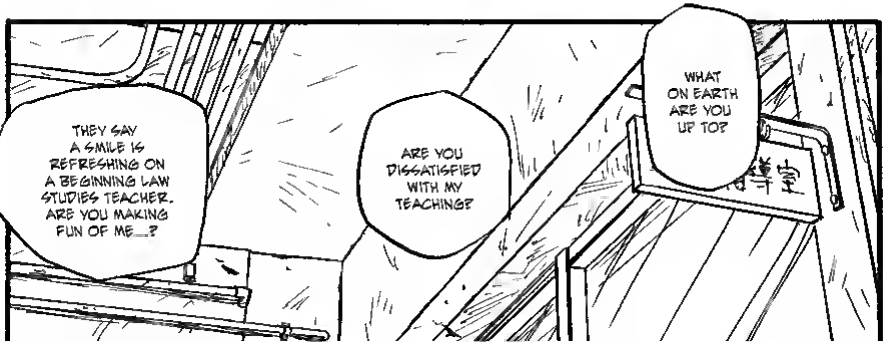
...ER...
FUKAZAWA-KUN...?
Beginning Law Studies

MEOW--
...THAT'S... THAT'S GOING TO BE A PROBLEM IF YOU NEED MY HELP.


MEOW--
...

MEOW--

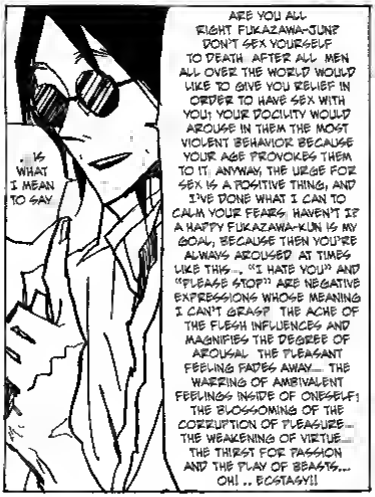
x
f(x)=ax²+bx+c (a≠0)
y
y=ax+b (a≠0)
?
I DON'T GET IT
SHOULD I LAUGH IN THIS SITUATION?


THEY SAY A SMILE IS REFRESHING ON A BEGINNING LAW STUDIES TEACHER. ARE YOU MAKING FUN OF ME...?
ARE YOU DISSATISFIED WITH MY TEACHING?
WHAT ON EARTH ARE YOU UP TO?

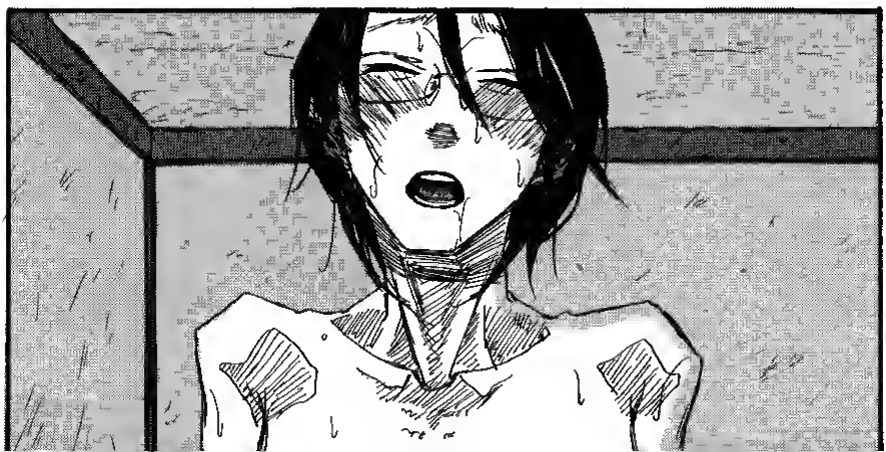
drool
drip
drip
drip
drip
HOWEVER, THAT'S WHY I ASKED WHY...? ARE YOU MAKING FUN OF ME?
MM!
SUCK
SUCK
MM—
MGAH!
PULL
OUT
IF YOU DON'T CUT THAT OUT, I'LL GET MAD AT YOU.
PU
LL
AH!

AAAH!
WHAT'S WITH THAT SOUND?
rub
found

MRRROW, SENSEI


...IS WHAT I MEAN TO SAY
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT FUKAZAWA-JUN? DON'T SEX YOURSELF TO DEATH. AFTER ALL, MEN ALL OVER THE WORLD WOULD LIKE TO GIVE YOU RELIEF IN ORDER TO HAVE SEX WITH YOU; YOUR DOCILITY WOULD AROUSE IN THEM THE MOST VIOLENT BEHAVIOR BECAUSE YOUR AGE PROVOKES THEM TO IT. ANYWAY, THE URGE FOR SEX IS A POSITIVE THING, AND I'VE DONE WHAT I CAN TO CALM YOUR FEARS. HAVEN'T I? A HAPPY FUKAZAWA-KUN IS MY GOAL, BECAUSE THEN YOU'RE ALWAYS AROUSED. AT TIMES LIKE THIS..., "I HATE YOU" AND "PLEASE STOP" ARE NEGATIVE EXPRESSIONS WHOSE MEANING I CAN'T GRASP. THE ACHE OF THE FLESH INFLUENCES AND MAGNIFIES THE DEGREE OF AROUSAL. THE PLEASANT FEELING FADES AWAY— THE WARRING OF AMBIVALENT FEELINGS INSIDE OF ONESELF! THE BLOSSOMING OF THE CORRUPTION OF PLEASURE— THE WEAKENING OF VIRTUE— THE THIRST FOR PASSION AND THE PLAY OF BEASTS... OH! .. ECSTASY!!

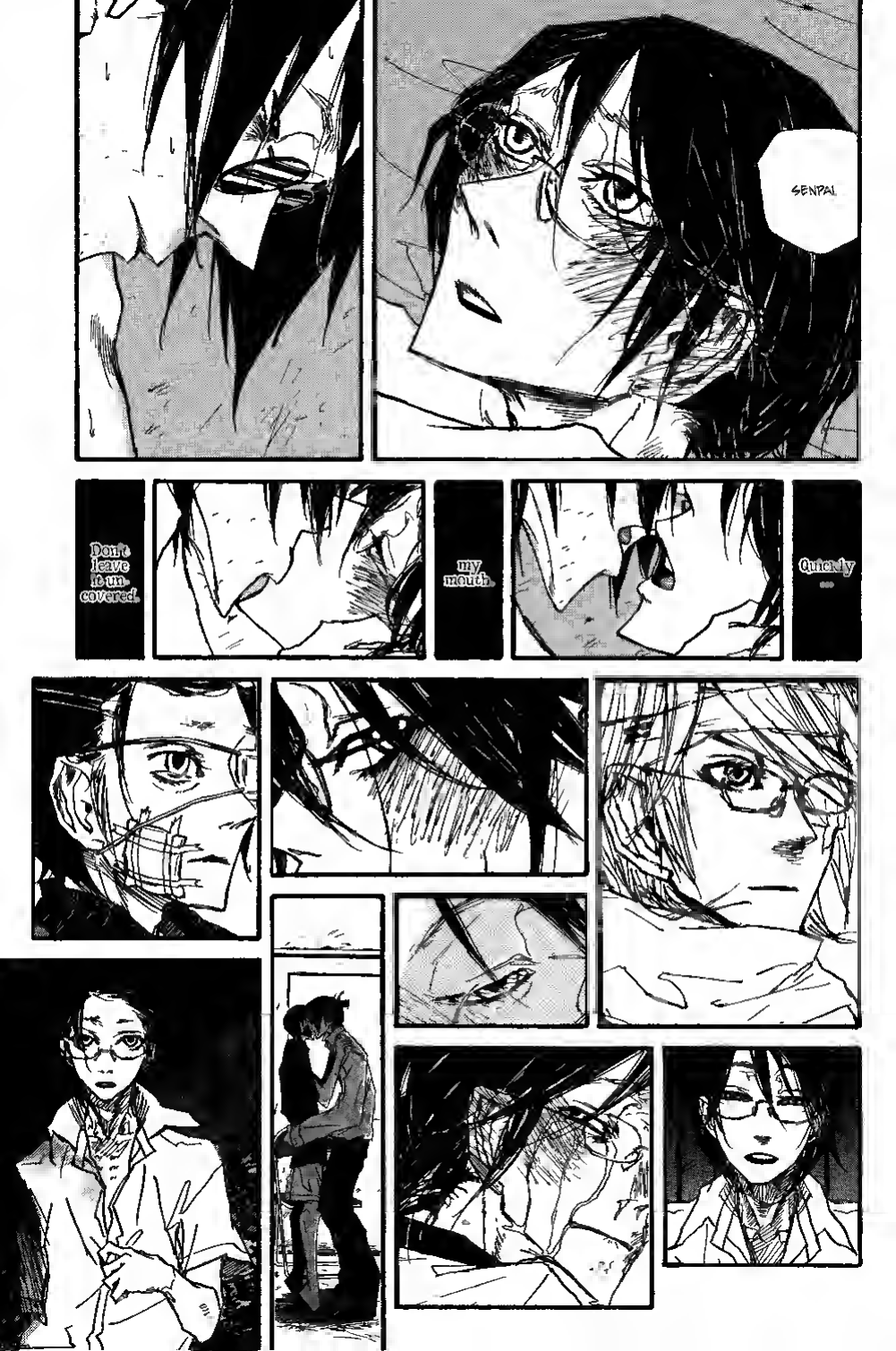
throb
BAD STUDENTS SHOULD GET SPANKED!



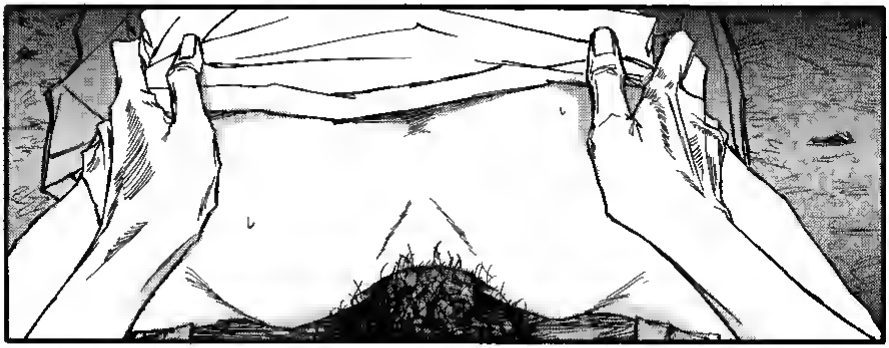
* THE BUDDHIST EQUIVALENT OF THE RIVER STYX

* FROM A SONG BY NUMBER GIRL

A [illegible] tank is extremely dangerous, [illegible] of where it aims its shells.


SENPAI
Don't leave it uncovered.
my mouth.
Quickly

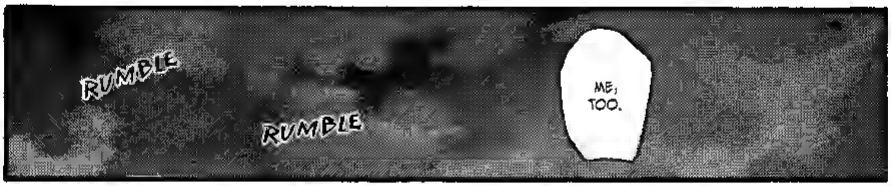
WE'LL BE CURSED
FOR DOING IT HERE...

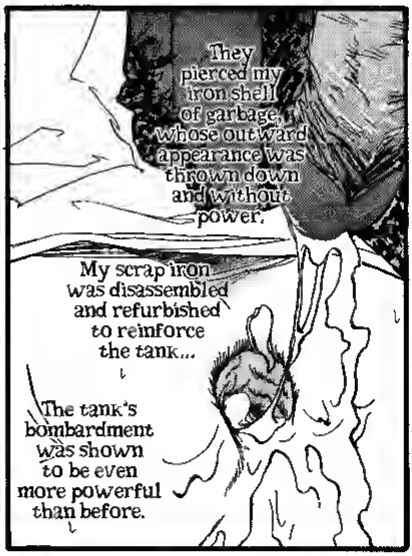


I LOVE YOU.

SENPAI.
WHAT IS IT?

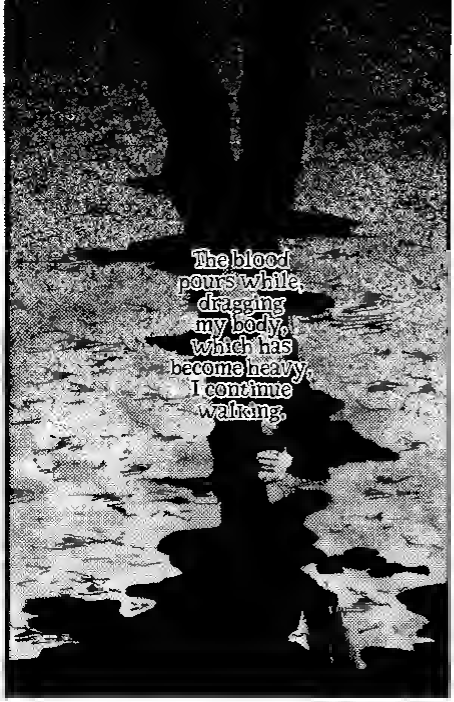
We had
cursed
...


RUMBLE
RUMBLE
ME, TOO.

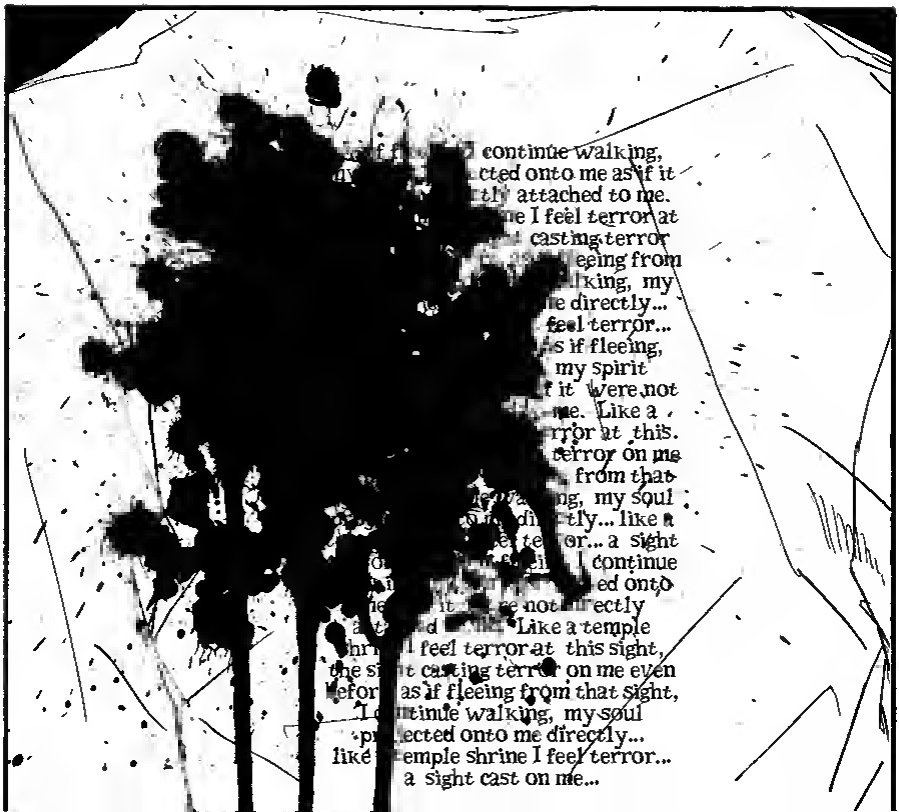

They pierced my iron shell of garbage, whose outward appearance was thrown down and without power.
My scrap iron was disassembled and refurbished to reinforce the tank...
The tank's bombardment was shown to be even more powerful than before.

...but then why did his words pierce me so sharply and deeply?

Of
could be heard falling.


The blood pours while, dragging my body, which has become heavy, I continue walking.

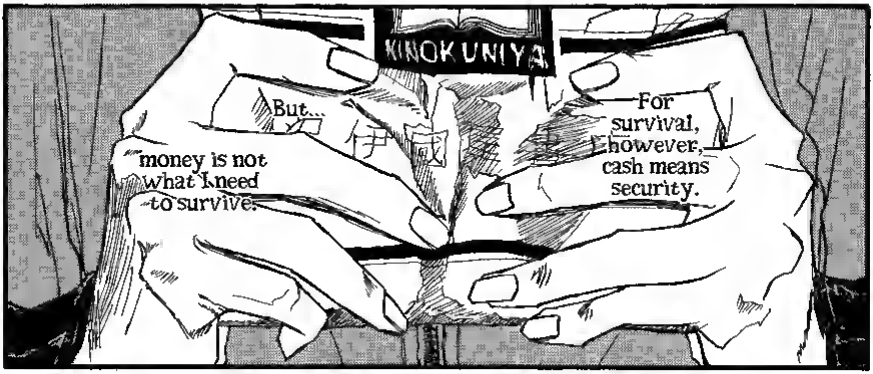
The man whose blood poured out was me.


continue walking,
cted onto me as if it
tly attached to me.
e I feel terror at
casting terror
eeing from
king, my
e directly...
feel terror...
s if fleeing,
my spirit
f it were not
me. Like a
rror at this.
terror on me
from that
ng, my soul
tly... like a
or... a sight
continue
ed onto
ectly
Like a temple
I feel terror at this sight,
t casting terror on me even
efore as if fleeing from that sight,
ntinue walking, my soul
ected onto me directly...
like emple shrine I feel terror...
a sight cast on me...

I am completed by your soul.
Mark X
YES?
FROM JUUZA.
HERE.

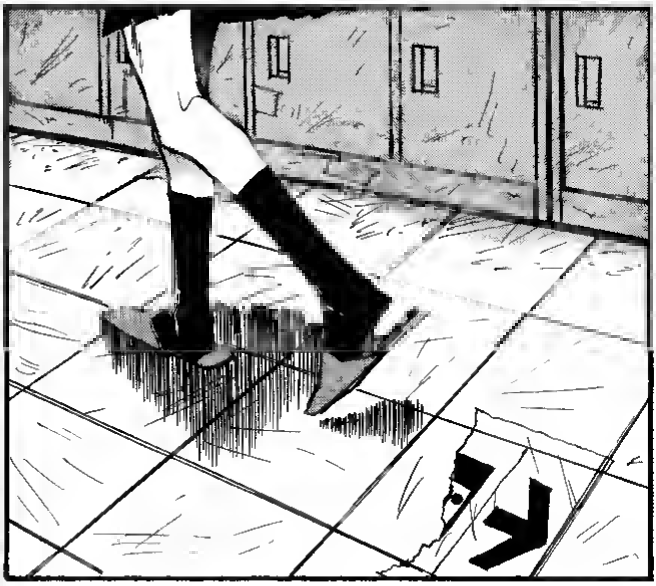
WHAT?
WELL, THAT'S ALL...
ERR...
THIS IS...
WELL, SPEAKING FRANKLY, YOU CERTAINLY HAVE EARNED IT.
SEEMS LIKE IT??
UH WELL, IS IT...
CONSO-LATION MONEY?
CONSOLATION MONEY...
CONSO-LATION MONEY...
WELL, THAT'S ALL, THEN...
...I'M JUST THE MESSENGER, YOU KNOW?
BUT IT'S JUST A GUESS.

CONSOLATION MONEY...
Opening the package with so many bills in it...
...just to see them made my head go squishy inside.
There was no way that money could be compared to being with senpai.
That these scraps of paper can be exchanged for food and books, and shinai, and dougi, and hakama is something I can understand.
But writing off being with senpai as being of the same nature as food and books and shinai and dougi and hakama is something my mind cannot process.


KINOKUNIYA
But...
money is not what I need to survive.
For survival, however, cash means security.

the thing that will give me security...
For me to be secure...

At the end of the summer tournament, the third years retired.
Senpai would occasionally and unpredictably turn up, capriciously doling out guidance to the kouhai.



PRACTICE WITH ME
CAPTAIN.
grasp
CUT IT OUT ALREADY.
HAHAHA.
HA, HA, HA. FUKAZAWA-KUN SAID SOMETHING FUNNY.
HE PLANS TO LEARN SOMETHING BY TRAINING WITH THOSE OF LESSER ABILITY

JUST DIE FUKAZAWA
SENPAI IF YOU WOULD PLEASE GIVE ME YOUR GUIDANCE!!

WHAT IN HELL AM I GOING TO SAY?
HE'S GOING TO HIT ME...
SORRY FOR MAKING YOU WAIT, BUT...
I'M ALREADY RETIRED.
OH, OONUKI-KUN IT LOOKS LIKE SHINKAWA-KUN WOULD LIKE TO RECEIVE YOUR GUIDANCE.
OH, YES! I'M SORRY!
spatter
spatter

I am the new captain, because senpai is no longer coming to the dojo, where his voice will no longer be heard... his stern guidance no longer received!
Absolutely NOT!!

H'LO.
GOOD MORNING.

IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR JUUZA, HE'S NOT HERE.

ER...

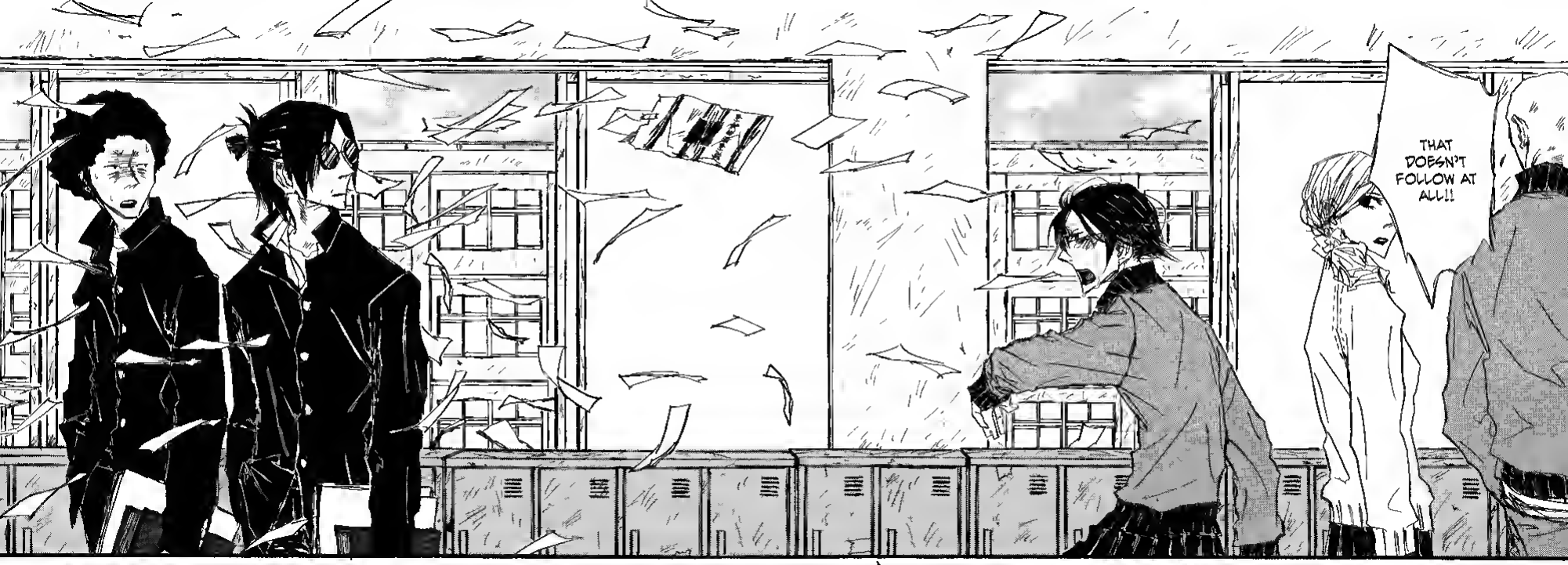
I came the next day... And I came the day after that. And I came the day after the day after that. I came every day, and when I came, it was always the same thing.

KAIKOU-
SENPAI!

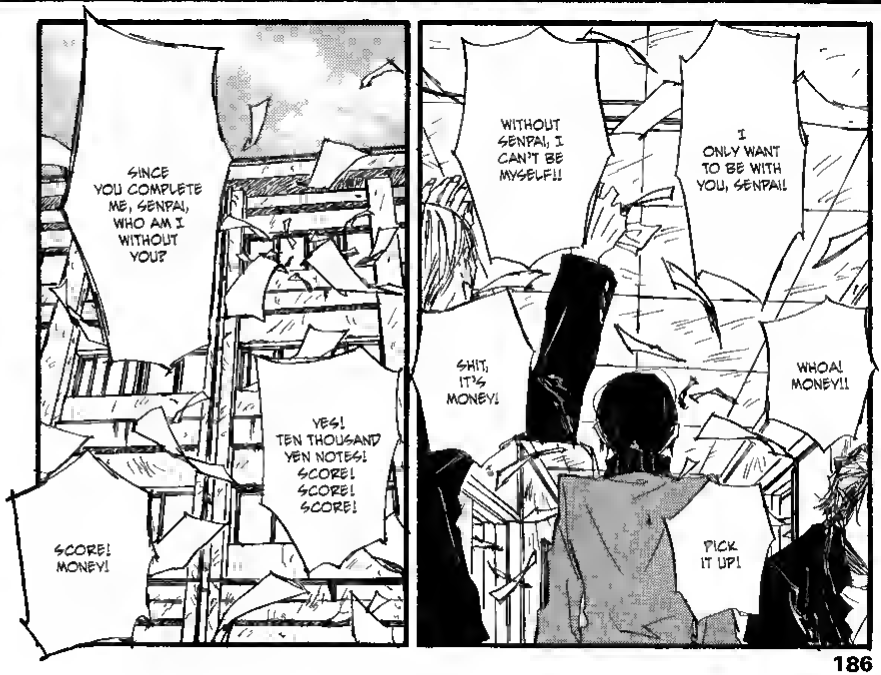
AH, I WISH I COULD CRAWL INTO A HOLE..
WHY?

SO NOW I NEED TO PUT MY LIFE IN ORDER.
WELL, BECAUSE NEXT SPRING I'M GETTING MARRIED TO

THAT DOESN'T FOLLOW!!


THAT DOESN'T FOLLOW AT ALL!!

TELL ME, PLEASE!!
WHO THE HELL AM I?! WHAT THE HELL AM I?!
ding dong
ding dong


SINCE YOU COMPLETE ME, SENPAI, WHO AM I WITHOUT YOU?
YES! TEN THOUSAND YEN NOTES! SCORE! SCORE! SCORE!
SCORE! MONEY!
WITHOUT SENPAI, I CAN'T BE MYSELF!!
I ONLY WANT TO BE WITH YOU, SENPAI!
SHIT, IT'S MONEY!
WHOA! MONEY!!
PICK IT UP!

WHAT? ARE YOU JUST GONNA LEAVE HIM THERE?
THERE'S THE BELL. LET'S GO.
ding
dong
SENPAI!
SENPAI!!
KAIKOU ...
KAIKOU JUUZA!!
WHOA... HE'S LOSING IT COMPLETELY.
YES, HE IS.
KOUKAI-SENPAI!!
WHAT IN HELL ARE YOU!?

THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE.
JUUZA, ARE YOU SUPERMAN OR WHAT?
AS YOU CAN SEE, I AM HUMAN.
"REAL DESTRUCTION, BABY" HAS REARED ITS HEAD
YOU'RE RIGHT
WITH DEEPEST APOLOGIES TO NISHIDA.*
HUMAN BEINGS ARE NOT VERY HUMANE.
"HUMANS ARE ACQUAINTED WITH GOD, BUT STILL THEY ARE EASILY SATISFIED WITH BEING DEMONS; IN BRIEF, THEY WANDER AROUND LOST IN A FOG, THE MOST PITIABLE OF LIVING CREATURES, IS SOMETHING THAT HAS BEEN SAID ON OCCASION."
* NISHIDA KITAROU (1870–1945) PHILOSOPHER
YEAH. AS I THOUGHT, YOU'RE AN INGRATE.
YOU'RE GOING TO BE LATE FOR YOUR NEXT CLASS.
AND... IF YOU WERE TO SAY THAT TO HIM?
Maybe you have a reckless deep-view of life
TRUE. AND TO BE EVEN MORE IMPOLITE,
CERTAINLY IT'S AGE APPROPRIATE FOR A PITIFUL CREATURE OF A STUDENT TO GIVE WAY TO FACILE, SENTIMENTAL FEELINGS.

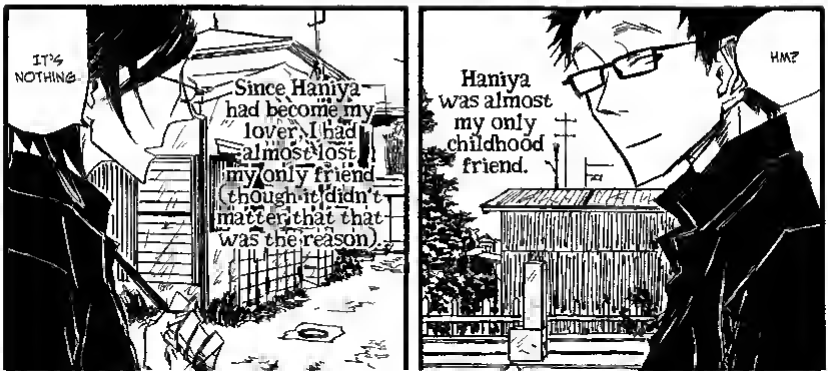
He went on to fifth period class or something. I really can't remember.
I am here in the place where he was standing.
The tears have stopped flowing.
It was so hard to understand this feeling.
He's been picked up by various students. The time I used to spend with senpai he now spends on eating and drinking and other pleasant things. I wonder if he's changed in various ways.

Loving results in sadness; fear is caused by love.
is
destroyed by change and ends in madness.

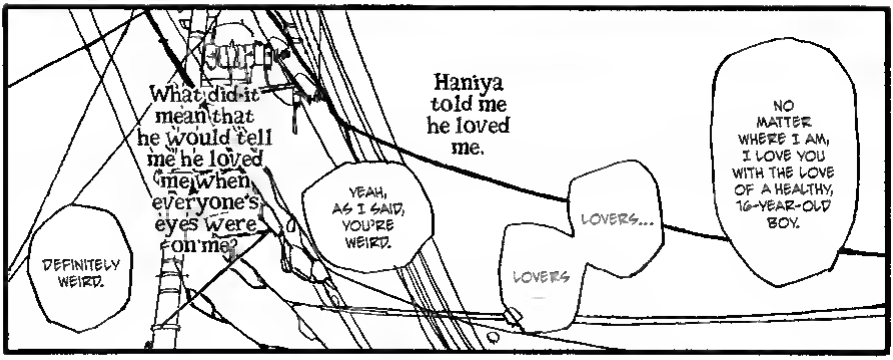
It ends in madness.

From that time until the graduation ceremony, he was rarely out of my thoughts.
EASY to Forget
CRAZY to Remember

YOU ARE ALSO ONE OF THOSE FRESHMEN.
SEEMS LIKE THIS STREET IS WHERE FRESHMEN LEARN ABOUT LIFE.
Did I want to be his lover? It was the sort of thing I was capable of.
AHAHA, THAT'S TRUE.

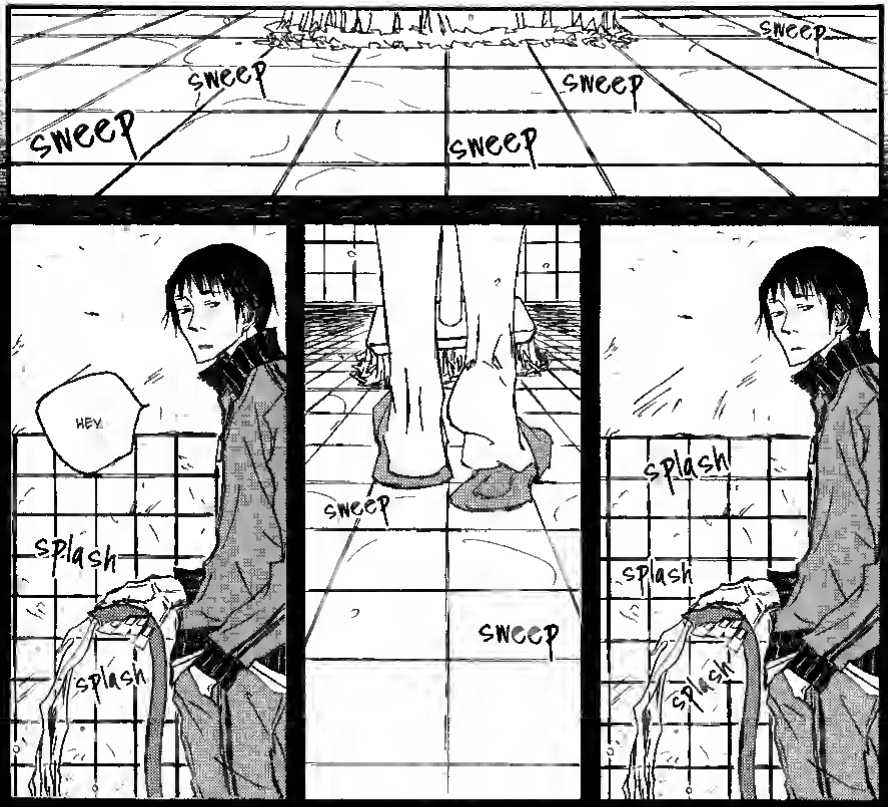

IT'S NOTHING.
Since Haniya had become my lover, I had almost lost my only friend (though it didn't matter that that was the reason).
Haniya was almost my only childhood friend.
HM?

HUH? THAT WAS OUT OF THE BLUE.
YOU'RE A WEIRD GUY.


What did it mean that he would tell me he loved me when everyone's eyes were on me?
Haniya told me he loved me.
DEFINITELY WEIRD.
YEAH, AS I SAID, YOU'RE WEIRD.
LOVERS
LOVERS...
NO MATTER WHERE I AM, I LOVE YOU WITH THE LOVE OF A HEALTHY, 16-YEAR-OLD BOY.

HOW MANY TIMES DID HE LET HIM FUCK HIM?
DID THEY FUCK?
WOW, THAT'S GREAT ALL BY ITSELF.
WHAT DID IT FEEL LIKE TO RIDE HIM?
MARK X!
HE WAS COMPLETED BY KAIKOU'S SOUL.
DO THEY FUCK?
I GUESS IT'S IMPOSSIBLE THAT HE'S ONLY HALF MAN.
Everyone enjoyed themselves in their own way, and I was fine with that.
My disgraceful behavior was the subject of humorous stories, and in the blink of an eye was spread around both in and outside of the school.
WHAT ABOUT FUEL?
DOES KAIKOU HAVE A SOUL?
ARE YOU PLANNING TO GIVE HIM A TEST DRIVE?
HE WAS PROBABLY THE BOTTOM.
I WONDER HOW MANY FRESHMEN HE DID IT WITH?
YOU MEAN SEMEN?
I SCORED 20,000.
THAT'S NOTHING... I GOT 40,000.
DISPOSABLE ONES, D'YOU THINK?
HE PROBABLY PLAYS WITH TOOLS.
ON A DESERTED ISLAND!
IT'S PART OF KAIKOU'S PERVERTED TRAINING PROBABLY.
PROBABLY BECAUSE HE'S AN EASY LAY.
WHY A SKIRT?

Maybe it was more that I wasn't using my head, which is why it might have been empty.
I didn't know who it was, or I've forgotten who it was.
My head was empty. Completely hollow.
There was one thing being said that I didn't understand very well. It was as if it was in the language of another country.
MEE-OW.


sweep
sweep
sweep
sweep
sweep
HEY.
splash
splash
sweep
sweep
splash
splash
splash

SWEEP
SWEEP
SWEEP
HEY.
SWEEP
SWEEP
SPLASH
SPLASH
SWEEP
SWEEP
SWEEP
SWEEP
SWEEP
WEREN'T THEY SAYING "MARK X"?
SWEEP
MARK.
SWEEP
SWEEP
SWEEP

glub
splash
splash
splash
splash
DIDN'T YOU HEAR WHAT PEOPLE WERE CALLING YOU?
WHAT BUSINESS IS IT OF YOURS?
splash
splash
splash
WELL, IT'S YOUR BUSINESS, ISN'T IT?
HOW LONG ARE YOU GOING TO WEAR THAT SKIRT?
AND WHY ARE YOU WEARING IT?

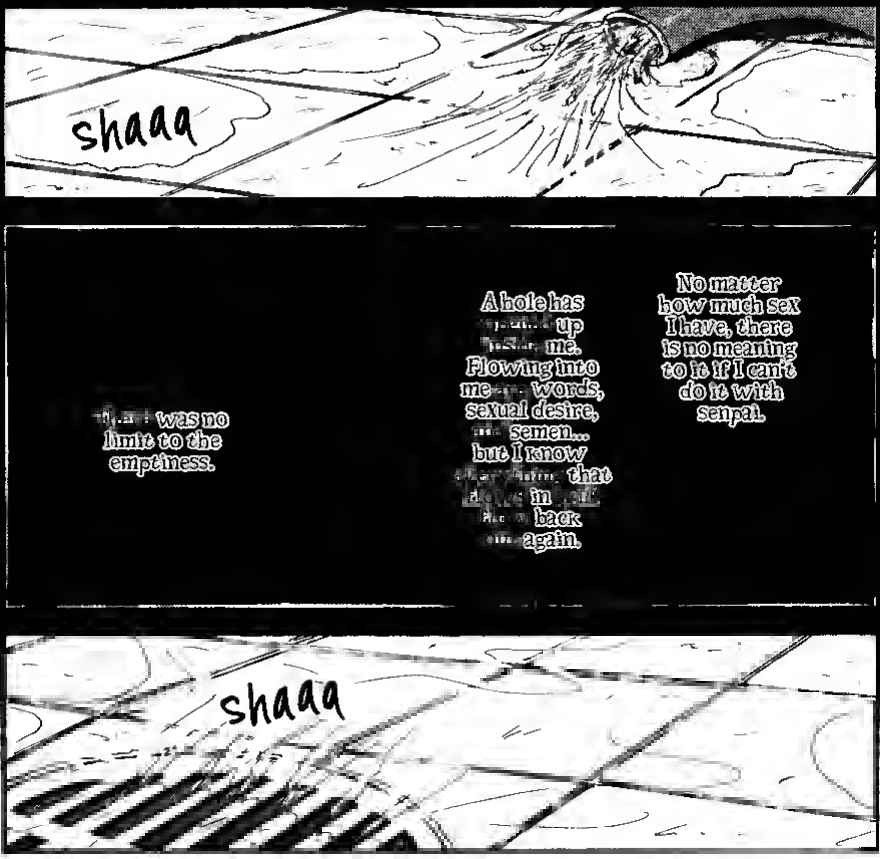
DIDN'T HE JUST LOUDLY BREAK UP WITH HIM ...!
At least, that's what I thought.
splash
splash
CAPTAIN KAIKOU TOLD ME TO.
THAT WAS JUST A LITTLE SPAT.
WAIT---
HUH?
WEREN'T YOU JUST SCREAMING AT SENPAI LIKE A BANSHEE?
splash
splash
splash
THAT'S IT.
I'M DONE HERE.
splash
splash
splash
splash
ARE YOU KIDDING?
DON'T BULLSHIT ME.
glub

WAS THAT FUN?
shaaa
I DON'T HAVE ANY MONEY.
There are people who pay me, and also those who don't.
I had scattered money among them which may have been used.
YOU'LL UNDERSTAND AFTER YOU SEE FOR YOURSELF.
YOU MAKE ME SICK, YOU BASTARD.
I feel funny, like I want to cry... a strange feeling inside me.

ARE YOU COMPARING
YOU'RE STILL GROWING, SO
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.
EVERY-THING YOU SAY MAKES ME SICK.
HAA!
HAA.
HAA.

THEY SAY KAIKOU-SENPAI IS A LOLICON AND A PEDOPHILE AND BI AND COMPLETELY IMPOTENT. A MASOCHIST AND A SADIST AND A DISABLED VETERAN AND HAS A FAKE ARM AND A FAKE LEG AND A FAKE EYE. IS A CHINESE BUSINESSMAN AND HAS A BODHISATTVA TATTOOED ON HIS BACK AND RUNS AN OPIUM ROUTE AND IS A PIMP. A CON MAN. A MALE PROSTITUTE. LIVES OFF OLDER WOMEN. IS A GIGOLO. HAS BEEN INVOLVED IN VIOLENT CRIMES AND SEX CRIMES. WAS HELD BACK A YEAR. IS REALLY 45... IN EARLIER DAYS WAS A HIT MAN WHO OCCASIONALLY BLEW HIS CAREFULLY PLANNED MURDERS AND KILLED WITH RECKLESS ABANDON BUT NOW. BENEATH THE PEACEFUL SURFACE OF THE MANAGER OF A TRANSVESTITE BAR... IS THE HIGHEST KINGPIN OF THE UNDERWORLD. DO YOU THINK WHAT THEY SAY IS TRUE?
rub rub
DON'T YOU THINK THEY'RE SAYING SOME STRANGE THINGS?
DON'T YOU THINK THE THINGS YOU'VE DONE WITH HIM ARE STRANGE?
THAT'S PRICELESS.
AH!
WHOA! WHAT JUST CAME OUT?
SHIT?
PROBABLY TABATA'S SEMEN.
NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT. HE FUCKED ME ON LUNCH BREAK.
WHOA.
HURRY UP AND ENTER ME...
MY HEAD IS BECOMING STRANGE.
LIKE, YOU CAN REALLY TAKE THE PAIN.
YOU'RE ALREADY TEN TIMES STRANGER THAN I THOUGHT.
Augh!
Uh!
Uh!
Uh!
Uh!
Uh!

I'M GONNA COME.
AH!
NO, NOT YET!
MORE!
AH!
AH!
HEY, FUKUZAWA, BE QUIET.
DEEPER
THRUST DEEP ENOUGH TO MOVE MY INTESTINES.
...UH!
sploosh


shaaa
No matter how much sex I have, there is no meaning to it if I can't do it with Senpai.
A hole has [illegible] up [illegible] me. Flowing into me [illegible] words, sexual desire, [illegible] semen... but I know [illegible] that [illegible] in [illegible] back [illegible] again.
[illegible] was no limit to the emptiness.
shaaa
shaaa
At least, that's sort of how I felt at the time.

THE AIR IS GETTING HUMID TOO
LOOKS LIKE IT'S GOING TO RAIN.
TODAY WE'RE HAVING TYPHOON EFFECTS RATHER THAN RAIN, IT SEEMS.
WHAT, HANIYA, DIDN'T YOU SEE THE WEATHER REPORT?
EH!? REALLY?
THAT'S LUCKY.
SO, ARE YOU GOING IN, FUKAZAWA?
AH...
WHAT A CLUELESS GUY.

ARE YOU GOING HOME BY THE USUAL WAY?
...
I'M NOT REALLY CONCERNED ABOUT IT, BUT...
HM? DID I SAY SOMETHING WEIRD?
I JUST WANTED TO KNOW IF YOU HAD AN UMBRELLA.
I DO NOT KNOW WHAT THOSE GOSSIPING IDIOTS ARE SAYING.
ANY CASE, I'M NOW THE CENTER OF THEIR ATTENTION.
I DON'T CARE EITHER.
I LOVE YOU, FUKAZAWA.
splash
splash
splash
ON THE OTHER HAND, ISN'T IT KIND OF CONVENIENT?

YES!
YOU SAID YOU LOVED ME!
WHAT? DID I SAY SOMETHING WEIRD AGAIN?
AND YOU'RE A GUY, TOO!!
OH, LEND ME A TOWEL.
I'M A GUY!
AND?
THAT'S WEIRD!
THANKS
Even though Fukazawa is strange, he's acting like it's me...
WHAT HE'S SAYING IS ALL MIXED UP.
IN OTHER WORDS, IT'S IMPOSSIBLE BECAUSE IT'S STRANGE!
WE'RE TALKING ABOUT RELATIONS BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN NOT RELATIONS BETWEEN MEN

GO OUT WITH ME.
YOU'VE ALWAYS BEEN LIKE THIS SINCE LONG AGO!
FUKA-ZAWA.
I LOVE YOU, FUKAZAWA.
EVEN THOUGH IT'S LIKE I'M TAKING ADVANTAGE OF YOUR BROKEN HEART.

I MADE HIM CRY...
TO START WITH, YOU DON'T KNOW ABOUT THE FEELINGS BEHIND THAT "I LOVE YOU."
SAYING YOU LOVE ME AS A FRIEND IS ENTIRELY DIFFERENT FROM SAYING YOU LOVE ME AS A LOVER.
I DON'T THINK I WANT TO HAVE SEX WITH YOU. I DON'T THINK I EVEN WANT TO KISS YOU.
...I'M...
I'M AN UN-SUITABLE LOVER.
I'M ABOUT THE WORLD'S ONLY LOVER WHO LACKS AWARENESS AND SELF-CONFIDENCE.
IN THESE CIR-CUMSTANCES, TO GO OUT WITH YOU WOULD BE INCONSI-DERATE.
IT'S FINE IF WE DON'T KISS OR HAVE SEX.
BUT I'M FINE WITH THAT.
EVEN SO, YOU'RE AGAINST IT, FUKAZAWA?
I didn't say it, but I wondered if all he wanted was for me to tell him my

HONESTLY.
WHAT? SO IT'S OKAY WITH YOU? REALLY?
HONESTLY.
REALLY.
THAT MAKES ME SUPER-HAPPY!
...I'M ALSO EXTREMELY INEXPERIENCED, BUT I RELY ON YOUR CARE.
...
I'M INEXPERI-ENCED, BUT...
WELL, ER, THEN...
FROM NOW ON PLEASE TREAT ME FAVOR-ABLY?
?

OH--
BUT I WAS LYING TOO
HA, HA.
THAT WAS A LIE!

OR MAYBE IT WOULD BE BETTER IF YOU DIDN'T TELL ME.
ENOUGH!
WHAT I'M ASKING IS WHAT PLACE WILL I HAVE IN YOUR HEART?
I WONDER IF HE CHANGED YOU
WELL... IT'S NOT GOOD TO START OUT THAT WAY.
HOW MANY TIMES? HOW LONG WERE YOU SEEING HIM?

I felt like dying. The tears couldn't stop flowing, so much so, I wanted to throw up.
It was also truly a moment I will never forget.
drip
drip
drip
sniff
sniff
sigh
I would rather have done that than swim in this river of tears.
UM...
Since I couldn't stop crying, I thought I should go somewhere else.
I'd forgotten what it felt like to hear these kinds of words, so I cried.
I'M SORRY. I CAN'T BE TACTFUL.
I'M A LITTLE UPSET RIGHT NOW.
IT'S OKAY.
IT'S OKAY REALLY.

THANKS.
IT'S YOUR TOWEL.
HERE, A TOWEL.
FIRST, WASH YOUR FACE AGAIN.
IT'S ALL MESSY.
WHOA
startle
sniff
sniff
NOTHING. I JUST WANTED TO SEE YOU UP CLOSE WITHOUT YOUR GLASSES.
YOU'RE ALMOST ALWAYS WEARING A MASK WHEN I SEE YOU
WH-WHAT IS IT, ALL OF A SUDDEN?

WHOA.
LOTS OF FINGER-PRINTS.
THE SAME TO YOU!
NO, NO! DON'T JUMP TO CONCLUSIONS LIKE THAT!
WHAT!? ARE YOU TREATING ME LIKE SOME RARE ANIMAL?
HOW RUDE.
A NEW DEVELOPMENT FOR "MARK X."
WE CAN'T USE THE WATER FOUNTAIN
HANIYA'S THE SACRI-FICE!
WHAT?
I WANT TO DO THIS SOMEWHERE ELSE.
ARE THEY ALWAYS THIS GROSS?

I'M EXTREMELY EMBARRASSED!
NOT "KIND OF"!
WELL... I THOUGHT YOU'D BE KIND OF EMBARRASSED
creak
AH. NOW THEY ARE FIXEDLY STARING INTO EACH OTHER'S EYES.
sha
ANYHOW NOW HE'S REALLY LIVING UP TO HIS NAME.
OH, YOU KNOW?
WHEN YOU TRY TO HIDE YOUR EMBARRASSMENT YOU JUST GET MORE EMBARRASSED, RIGHT?
splash
splash
splash

I continued to wash my face because I wanted to hide my [illegible]

He could have kissed me while I washed my face. From that distance, however, Haniya in his innocence probably thought I was still crying. It [illegible] as if I could go on washing my face forever.

I also hid various other things out of embarrassment. Endlessly continuing to wash my face.

It was like a memory.

It was like an illusion.

I Want To Be Loved

01

IN TODAY'S WEATHER, WE'LL BE RECEIVING THE IMPACT OF TYPHOON NO.12, BRINGING WITH IT A LOW PRESSURE SYSTEM.

PLEASE STOP READING THE NEWSPAPER WHILE EATING

HM.

ARE YOU LISTENING TO ME?

STARTING TONIGHT AND INTO EARLY TOMORROW MORNING, THE KANTO REGION WILL RECEIVE HEAVY RAIN, BUT--

HEAVY RAIN STARTING TONIGHT?

OH, NO.

THE LAUNDRY!

I'M GOING!
HAVE A GOOD DAY!
OH, SHIROU! REMEMBER TO TAKE YOUR UMBRELLA.
I'm not going to carry an umbrella...
...because I'm going to fall in love.

Shaaaaaa

Because the world is a beautiful place, even though...

I will not hold him in my arms forever.

He will leave my arms empty...

All alone.

Cowardly and dirty...

...in this beautiful world...

Chapter 3/ End